

A  
JOVIAL CREW:

OR,

The Merry Beggars

A  
COMEDY,

As it is ACTED at the

Theatre Royal.

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BY

RICHARD BROME, Gent.

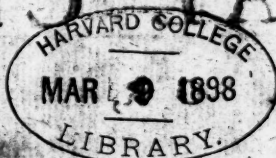
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LONDON:

Printed for Joseph Hindmarsh, Bookseller to His  
Royal Highness, at the Black Bull  
in Cornhill, 1684.

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JOVIAL CREW:



The Merry Beggars

COMEDY

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RICHARD BROME, GORE

LONDON.

Printed for Joseph Stansfeld, Bookseller, to His Royal Highness, at the Black Lion, in St. James's Street, 1884.



The Patient & the Play

Right Noble, Ingenious, and Judicious Gentleman,

THOMAS STANLEY, Esq;

SIR,

I Have, long since, studied in these Anti-ingenious Times, to find out a Man that might at once, be both a Judge and a Patron to this Issue of my Old Age, which needs both. And my blessed Stars have flung me upon You: In whom both these Attributes Concentre and Flourish: Nor can I yet find a reason, why I should present it to You, (it being below your Acceptance or Censure) but only my own Confidence; which had not grown to this Forwardness, had it not been encouraged by Your Goodness. Yet we all know, Beggars use to flock to great mens Gates. And, though my Fortune has cast me into that Mold, I am poor and proud; and preserve the humor of him, who could not beg for any thing, but great Boons: Such as your kind Acceptance and Protection: I dare not say (as my Brethren use) that I present this, as a Testimonial of my Gratitude, or Recompence for your Favours: For (I protest) I conceive it so far from quitting Old Engagements, that it creates New. So that, all, that this Play can do, is but to make more Work; and involves me in Debts, beyond a possibility of Satisfaction. Sir, it were a folly in me, to tell you of your Worth, the World knows it enough; and are hold to say, Fortune and Nature, scarce ever clud'd so well. You know, Sir, I am Old, and cannot Cringe and Court, Was the powder'd and ribbanded Wits of our days: But, though I cannot speak so much, I can think as well, and act honourably as the best. All the Arguments I can use to induce you to take notice of this thing of nothing, is, That it had the Luck to tumble last of all in the Epidemical ruine of the Scene; and now limps vnder with a Wooden Leg, to beg an Aids at Your hands. I will wind up all, with a Use of Exhortation, That since the Times conspire to make us all Beggars, let us make our selves merry; which (if I am not mistaken) this drives at. Be pleased therefore, Sir, to lodge these harmful Beggars in the Out-houses of your Thoughts; and among the rest, Him, that in this Cuckoo Time, puts in for Membership, and will fill the Choyce of those, that Duly and truly pray for you, and is

SIR,

Your humble Servant

RICH. BROME.

# The Persons of the Play.

<b>O</b> ldrents, an ancient Esquire,	Miss Gilson
Hearty, his Friend, and merry Com- panion, but a decay'd Gentleman.	Mr. Lee.
Spinglove, Steward to Master Oldrents,	Mr. Perce.
Vincen,	Mr. Carle.
Two young Gentlemen,	
Edwards,	Mr. Boman.
Kan'tall, a Groom, Servant to Oldrents,	Mr. Perce.
Master Semswell,	Mr. Baber.
and two other } Friends to Justice Clack,	Mr. Freeman.
Gent.	
Oliver, the Justices Son,	Mr. Wiltshire.
Master Clack, the Justice himself,	Mr. Jern.
Master Talbot, Lover to the Justices Niece,	Mr. Montfort.
Martin, the Justices Clerk,	Mr. Br'ght.
Chaplain,	Mr. Low.
Officer,	Mr. Norris.
Butler,	Mr. Sanders.
Cook,	Mrs. Cook.
Rachel,	
Oldrents's Daughters,	
Meriel,	Mrs. Perce.
Amie,	Mrs. Toyford.
Autum-More, an Old Beggar-Woman,	Mrs. Norris.
Patricio,	Mr. Griffing.
Souldier,	Mr. Norris.
Lawyer,	Mr. Bight.
Courtier,	Mr. Montfort.
Scribble, their Poet,	Mr. Sanders.
Divers other Beggars, Fiddlers, and Mutes.	

## PROLOGUE.

THE Title of our Play, A Jovial Crew,  
May seem to promise Mirth: Which were a new,  
And forc'd thing, in these sad and tragick days,  
For you to find; or we express in Plays.  
We wish you, then, would change that expectation,  
Since Jovial-Mirth is now grown out of fashion.  
Or much not to expect: For, now it chanceth,  
(Our Comick Writer finding that Romances  
Of Lovers, through much travel and distress,  
Till he be thought, no Power can redress  
His afflicted Wanderers, though slow Recovery  
Lend all his aid for their delivery;

Till, lastly, some impossibility  
Concludes all strife, and makes a Comedy.)  
Finding (he says) such Stories bear the sway,  
Near as he could, he has compos'd a Play,  
Of Fortune-tellers, Barmsees, and their Squires,  
Expos'd to strange Adventures, through the Briers  
Of Love and Fate. But why need I foretell  
What shall so soon be obvious to you all:  
But wish the drowsie may make no man sleep,  
Nor sadness of it any Woman weep.

# JOVIAL CREW:

## OR, THE

# Merry Beggars.

### ACT. I.

*Oldrants. Heary.*

**Old.** IT has indeed, Friend, much afflicted me.

*Hea.* And very justly, let me tell you, Sir,  
That could so impiously be curious

To tempt a judgement on you; to give ear,  
And Faith too (by your leave) to *Fortune-tellers, Wizards and Cypsa*.

*Old.* I have since been frighted with it in a thousand dreams.

*Hea.* I would be drunk

A thousand times to Bed, rather than dream  
Of any of their *Riddemy Riddlemies*.

If they prove happy so: If not, let's go;

You'll never find their meaning, till the event;

If you suppose there was, at all, a meaning,

As the equivocating Devil had, when he

Cosen'd the Monk, to let him live Soul-free,

Till he should find him sleeping between sheets:

The warie Monk, abjuring all such lodging,

At last, by over-watching in his Studie,

The foul Fiend took him napping with his Nose

Betwixt the sheet-leaves of his Conjuring Book.

There was the whim, or double meaning on't,

But these Fond *Fortune-Tellers*, that know nothing;

Aim to be thought more Cunning than their Master

The foresaid Devil, tho' truly not so harmful;

Yet trust 'em, hang 'em *Wizards*, Old blind *Buzzards*,

For once they hit, they miss a thousand times;

And most times give quite contrary, bad for good,

And best for worst. One told a Gentleman

His Son should be a man-killer, and hang'd for't;

Who, after prov'd a great and rich Physician,

And with great Fame in University

Hang'd up in Picture for a grave example.

There was the *Whim* of that. Quite contrary!



*Old.* And that was happy, would mine could so deceive my fears.

*Hea.* They may : but trust not to't. Another *Schemist*  
Found, that a squint-ey'd boy should prove a notable  
Pick-purse, and afterwards a most strong Thief :  
When he grew up to be a cunning Lawyer,  
And at last died a Judge. Quite contrary !  
How many have been mark'd out by these *Wards*  
For fools, that after have been prick'd for Sheriffs ?  
Was not a Shepherd boy foretold to be  
A Drunkard, and to get his Living from  
Bawds, Whores, Thieves, Quarters and the like ?  
And did he not become a Suburbe Justice ?  
And live in Wine and Worship by the Fees  
Rack'd out of such Delinquents ? There's the *whim* on't.  
Now I come to you : Your *Figure flager* finds,  
That both your Daughters, notwithstanding all  
Your great Possessions, which they are Co-heirs of,  
Shall yet be Beggars : May it not be meant,  
(If, as I said, there be a meaning in it )  
They may prove *Courtiers*, or great *Courtiers* Wives,  
And so be Beggars in Law ? Is not that the *whim* on't think you ? You shall  
think no worse on't.

*Old.* Would I had your merry heart.

*Hea.* I thank you, Sir.

*Old.* I mean the like.

*Hea.* I would you had ; and I

Such an Estate as yours. Four Thousand yearly,  
With such a heart as mine, would *deface* Fortune  
And all her Babbling Southayers. 'Hd as soon  
Distrust in Providence, as lend a fear  
To such a Destiny, for a Child of mine  
While there be Sack and Songs in Town or Country,  
Think like a man of Conscience (now I am serious)  
What justice can there be for such a *Chafe*  
To fall upon your Heirs ? Do you not live  
Free, out of Law, or grieving any man ?  
Are you not th' only Rich man lives un-envied ?  
Have you not all the praises of the *Rich*  
And prayers of the *Poor* ? *Daff* ever any  
Servant, or Hireling, Neighbour, Kindred, curse you,  
Or with one minute shorten'd of your Life ?  
Have you one grudging Tenant ? will they not all  
Fight for you ? Do they not teach their Children  
And make 'em too, pray for you Morn' and Evening,  
And in their Graces too, as duly as  
For King and Realm ? The innocent things would think  
They ought not eat else.

*Old.* Is their goodness

*Hea.* It is your merit. Your great love and bounty  
Procures from *Heaven* those inspirations in 'em.

Whole

Whose Rent did ever you exact? whose have  
 You not remitted, when by Castles  
 Of Fire, of Floods, of common Death, or Sickness,  
 Poor men were brought behind-hand? Nay, whose Losses  
 Have you not piously repaired? *Old. Enough.*

*Hea.* What Harlots have you tane from forlorn Widows?  
 What Acre of your Thousands have you rack'd?

*Old.* Good Friend no more.

*Hea.* These are enough, indeed.

To fill your Ears with joyful acclamations

Where e're you pass; Heaven blest our Landlord *Oldrent*;

Our Master *Oldrent*; our good Patron *Oldrent*;

Cannot these sounds conjure that evil Spirit

Of fear out of you, that your Children shall

Live to be Beggars? Shall Squire *Oldrent's* Daughters

Wear old rents in their Garments? (there's a whim too)

Because a Fortune-teller told you so?

*Old.* Come, I will strive to think no more on't.

*Hea.* Will you ride forth for Air then, and be merry?

*Old.* Your counsel and example may instruct me.

*Hea.* Sack must be had in sundry places too.

For Songs I am provided.

*Enter Springlove with Books and Papers, he lays them on the Table.*

*Old.* Yet here comes one brings me a second fear,

Who has my care next unto my Children.

*Hea.* Your Steward, Sir, it seems has business with you.

I wish you would have none.

*Old.* I'll soon dispatch it.

And then be for our journey instantly.

*Hea.* I'll wait your coming down, Sir.

*Old.* But why, *Springlove*,

Is now this expedition? *Spr. Sir, 'Tis duty.*

*Old.* Not common among Stewards, I confess,

To urge in their Accompts before the day

Their Lords have limited. Some that are grown

To hoary hairs and Knighthoods, are not found

Guilty of such an importunity.

'Tis yet but thirty-days, when I give forty

After the half-year day, our Lady last.

Could I suspect my Trust were lost in thee;

Or doubt thy youth had not Ability

To carry out the weight of such a Charge,

I, then, should call on thee.

*Spr. Sir, your Indulgence,*

I hope, shall ne'r corrupt me. Ne'rtheless,

The testimony of a fair Discharge

From time time to time, will be encouragement

To virtue in me. You may then be pleas'd

*{Springlove turns over the  
 several Books to his Master.  
 To*

To take here a Survey of all your Rents  
 Receiv'd, and all such other payments, as  
 Came to my hands since my last Audit, for  
 Cattel, Wool, Corn, all Fruits of Husbandry.  
 Then, my Receipts and Bonds, and some new Leases,  
 With some Old Debts, and almost desperate ones,  
 As well from Countrey Cavaliers, as Courtiers.  
 Then, here Sir, are my several Disbursements,  
 In all particulars for your self and Daughters,  
 In charge of House-keeping, Buildings and Repairs,  
 Journeys, Apparel, Coaches, Gifts and all  
 Expences For your personal necessities.  
 Here for supplies of Horses, Hawks and Hounds,  
 Here, Servants Wages, Liveries, and Cures.  
 And lastly, not the least to be remembered,  
 Your large Benevolence to the Poor.

*Old.* Thy Charity there goes hand in hand with mine.  
 And, *Springlove*, I commend it in thee, that  
 So young in years art grown to ripe in goodness.  
 May their Heaven-piercing Prayers bring on thee  
 Equal Rewards with me.

*Spr.* Now here, Sir, is  
 The balance of the several Accompts,  
 Which shews you what remains in Cash: which added  
 Unto your former Bank, makes up in all—

*Old.* Twelve thousand and odd pounds.

*Spr.* Here are the Keys  
 Of all. The Chests are safe in your own Closet.

*Old.* Why in my Closet? is not yours as safe?

*Spr.* O Sir, you know my Suit.

*Old.* Your Suit? what Suit?

*Spr.* Touching the time of Year.

*Old.* 'Tis well-nigh May.

Why what of that good *Springlove*.

*Spr.* O, Sir you hear I am call'd.

*Old.* Fie *Springlove*, fie.

I hop'd thou hadst abjur'd that uncouth practice.

*Spr.* You thought I had forsaken Nature then.

*Old.* Is that disease of nature still in thee

So virulent? and, notwithstanding all

My favours, in my gifts, my cares, and counsels,

Which to a Soul ingrateful might be boasted:

Have I first bred thee, and then prefer'd thee (from  
 I will not say how wretched a beginning)

To be a Master over all my Servants;

Planted thee in my bosom; and canst thou,

There, slight me for the whistling of a Bird?

*Spr.* Your reason, Sir, informs you, that's no cause.

But 'tis the season of the year that calls me.

(*Nightingale sings*;

Who



What moves her Noats, provokes my disposition  
By a more absolute power of Nature, than  
Philosophie can render an account for.

Old. I find there's no expelling it; but still  
It will return. I have try'd all the means  
(As I may safely think) in humane wisdom,  
And did (as dear as reason could) assure me,  
That thy last years restraint had stopp'd for ever,  
That running fore on thee, that gadding humour:  
When, only for that cause, I laid the weight  
Of mine Estate in Stewardship upon thee,  
Which kept thee in that Year, after so many  
Summer vagaries thou hadst made before.

Spr. You kept a Swallow in a Cage that while  
I cannot, Sir, indure another Summer  
In that restraint, with Life: 'twas then my torment,  
But now, my Death. Yet, Sir, my Life is yours:  
Who are my Patron; freely may you take it.  
Yet pardon, Sir, my frailty, that do  
A small continuance of it on my knees.

Old. Can there no means be found to preserve Life  
In thee, but wandering, like a Vagabond?  
Does not the Sun as comfortably shine  
Upon my Gardens, as the opener Fields;  
Or on my Fields, as others far remote?  
Are not my Walks and Greens as delectable  
As the High-ways and Commons? Are the shades  
Of Sycamore and Bowers of Eglantine  
Less pleasing than of Bramble, or Thorn Hedges;  
Or of my Groves and Thickets than wilder Woods?  
Are not my Fountain waters fresher than  
The troubled streams, where every Beast does drink?  
Do not the Birds sing here as sweet and lively  
As any other where? is not thy Bed more soft,  
And Rest mote safe, than in a Field or Barn?  
Is a full Table, which is call'd mine own,  
Less curious or wholsom, than the scraps  
From others Trenchers, twice or thrice translated?

Spr. Yea, in the Winter season, when the Fire  
Is sweeter than the Air.

Old. What Air is wanting.  
Spr. O Sir, y'have heard of Pilgrimages, and  
The voluntary Travels of good men.

Old. For Pennance; or to hol'y ends but bring  
Not those into comparision, I charge you.

Spr. I do not, Sir. But pardon me, to think  
Their Sufferings are much sweetened by delights,  
Such as we find, by visiting Place and Air.

Old. Are there delights in beggery? Or, if to take  
Diversity of Air be such a solace,

B Travel

Travel the Kingdom over: And if this  
Yield not variety enough, try further:  
Provided your deportment be gentle,  
Take Horse, and Man, and Money: you have all,  
Or I'll allow enough.

*Spr.* O how am I confounded:  
Dear Sir, retort me naked to the World,  
Rather than lay those burdens on me, which  
Will stifle me. I must abroad or perish.

*Old.* I will no longer strive to wash this Mortality:  
Nor breath more minutes so unchristly,  
In civil argument, against rude wind,  
But rather practise to withdraw my love  
And tender care (if it be possible)  
From that unfruitful breast; incapable  
Of wholesome counsel.

*Spr.* Have I your leave, Sir?  
*Old.* I leave you to dispute it with your self:  
I have no voice to bid you go, or stay:  
My love shall give thy will preheminance;  
And leave th' effect to Time and Providence.

*Spr.* I am confounded in my obligation  
To this good man: His virtue is my punishment,  
When 'tis not in my Nature to return  
Obedience to his Merits. I could wish  
Such an Ingratitude were death by th' laws,  
And put in present execution on me,  
To rid me of my sharper suffering.  
Nor but by death, can this predominant sway  
Of nature be extinguish'd in me. I  
Have fought with my Affections, by th' assistance  
Of all the strength of Art and Discipline  
(All which I owe him for in Education too)  
To conquer and establish my observance  
(As in all other Rules) to him in this.

This inborn strong desire of Liberty  
In that free course, which he detests as shameful.

And I approve my Earths felicity:  
But find the war is endless, and must fly.

What must I lose then? A good Master's love;

What loss feels he that wants nor what he loses?

They'll say I lose all Reputation.

What's that, to live where no such thing is known?

My duty to a Master will be question'd.

Where duty is exacted it is none:

And among Beggars, each man is his own.

*Enter Randal, and three or four Servants with a great Kettle, and Black Jacks, and  
a Bakers Basket, all empty, exeunt with all, mance Randal.*

*Now*

Now fellows, what news from whence you came?

*Ran.* The old wonted news, Sir, from your Guest-house, the Old Barn. We have unladen the Bread-basket, the Beef-kettle, and the Beer-Bambards there, amongst your Guests the Beggars. And they have all prayed for you and our Master, as their manner is, from the Teeth outward, enstrie from the Teeth inwards, 'tis enough to swallow your Alms, from whence I think their Prayers seldom come.

*Spr.* Thou should'st not think uncharitably.

*Ran.* Thought's free, Master Steward, and it please you. But your Charity is nevertheless notorious, I must needs say.

*Spr.* Meritorious thou meant'st to say.

*Ran.* Surely Sir, no; 'tis out of our Curats Book.

*Spr.* But I aspire no merits, nor popular thanks,  
'Tis well if I do well in it.

*Ran.* It might be better though (if Old Randal, whom you allow to talk, might counsel) to help to breed up poor mens children, or decayed labourers, paid their work, or travel; or towards the setting up of poor young married Couples; than to bestow an hundred pound a year (at least you do that, if not all you get) besides our Master's bounty, to maintain in begging such wanderers as these, that never are out of their way; that cannot give account from whence they came, or whither they would; nor of any Beginning they ever had, or any End they seek, but still do strowe and beg till their bellies be full, and then sleep till they be hungry.

*Spr.* Thou art ever repining at those poor people! they take nothing from thee but thy pains: and that I pay thee for too. Why should'st thou grudge?

*Ran.* Am I not bitten to it every day, by the six-footed blood-hounds that they leave in their Litter, when I throw out the old, to lay fresh straw for the new comers at Night. That's one part of my Office. And you are sure that though your Hospitality be but for a Night and a Morning for one Rabble, to have a new Supply every Evening. They take nothing from me indeed, they give too much.

*Spr.* Thou art old Randal still! ever grumbling, but still officious for 'em.

*Ran.* Yes: hang 'em, they know I love 'em well enough, I have had merry bouts with some of 'em.

*Spr.* What say'st thou Randal?

*Ran.* They are indeed my pastime. I left the merry Griggs (as their provender has prickt 'em) in such a Hoigh yonder! such a frolick! you'll hear anon, as you walk nearer 'em.

*Spr.* Well honest Randal. Thus it is. I am for a journey. I know not how long will be my absence. But I will presently take order with the Cook, Pantler and Butler, for my wonted Allowance to the Poor; And I will leave money with thee to manage the Affair till my return.

*Ran.* Then up rise Randal, Bayley of the Beggars.

*Spr.* And if our Master shall be displeas'd (although the Charge be mine) at the openness of the Entertainment, thou shalt then give it proportionably in Money, and let them walk farther.



*Ran.* Plough ! that will never do't, never do 'em good : 'Tis the Seat, the Habitation, the Rendevous, that chears their hearts. Money would clog their Consciences. Nor must I lose the Musick of 'em in their Lodging.

*Spr.* We will agree upon't anon. Go now about your business.  
*Ran.* I go. Bayley ? nay Steward and Chamberlain of the Rogues and Beggars. *Exit.*

*Spr.* I cannot think but with a trembling fear

On this Adventure, in a scruple, which  
 I have not weigh'd with all my other doubts.

I shall, in my departure, rob my Master.

Of what ? of a true Servant ; other Theft

I have committed none. And that may be supply'd,

And better too, by some more constant to him.

But I may injure many in his Trust,

Which now he cannot be but sparing of.

I rob him too, of the content and hopes

He had in me, whom he had built and rais'd

Unto what growth in his affection,

That I became a gladness in his Eye,

And now must be a grief or a vexation

Unto his noble heart. But heark ? I there's

The Harmony that drowns all doubts and fears.

A little nearer—

Song.

**F**rom Hunger and Cold who lives more free,  
 Or who more richly clad than we ?

Our Bellies are full ; our flesh is warm ;

And, against Pride, our Rags are a Charm.

Enough is our Feast, and for to morrow

Let Rich Men care : we feel no sorrow.

No Sorrow, no Sorrow, no Sorrow, no Sorrow.

Let Rich Men care, we feel no Sorrow.

*Spr.* The Emperour hears no such Musick ; nor feels Content like this :

Each City, each Town, and every Village,

Affords us either an Alms or Pillage.

And if the Weather be Cold and Raw

Then in a Barn we tumble in Straw.

If Warm and Fair, by yea-cock and nay-cock

The Fields will afford us a Hedge or a Hay-cock.

A Hay-cock, a Hay-cock, a Hay-cock, a Hay-cock.

The Fields will afford us a Hedge or a Hay-cock.

*Spr.* Most ravishing delight ! But, in all this  
 Onely one sense is pleas'd : mine Ear is feasted.

Mine Eyes too must be satisfied with my joys.

The hoarding Usurer cannot have more

Thirsty desire to see his golden store.

When he unlocks his Treasury, than I

The equipage in which my Beggars lye.

*He opens the Scene; the Beggars are discover'd in their postures; then they  
issue forth; and last, the Parrico.*

*All.* Our Master, our Master! our sweet and comfortable Master.

*Spr.* How cheat my hearts?

*1 Beg.* Most crowle, most capringly.

Shall we dance, shall we sing, to welcome our King?

Strike up Piper a merry merry dance

That we on our stampers may foot it and prance,

To make his heart merry as he has made ours;

As lustick and frolique as Lords in their Bowers.

*Musick. Dance.*

*Spr.* Exceeding well perform'd.

*1 Beg.* 'Tis well if it like you, Master. But we have not that Rag among us, that we will not daunce off, to do you service; we being all and only your Servants, most Noble Sir. Command us therefore and imploy us, we beseech you.

*Spr.* Thou speak'st most Courtly.

*2 Beg.* Sir, he can speak, and could have writ as well. He is a decay'd Poet, newly fallen in among us; and begs as well as the best of us. He learnt it pretty well in his own profession before; and can the better practise it in ours now.

*Spr.* Thou art a Wit too, it seems.

*3 Beg.* He should have Wit and Knavery too, Sir; For he was an Attorney, till he was pitch'd over the Bar. And, from that fall, he was taken up a Knight o'the Post; and so he continued, till he was degraded at the whipping-post; and from thence he ran resolutely into this course. His cunning in the Law, and the others labour with the *Muses* are dedicate to your Service; and for my self, I'll fight for you.

*Spr.* Thou art a brave Fellow, and speakest like a Commander. Hast thou born Arms?

*4 Beg.* Sir, he has born the Name of a *Netherland* Souldier, till he ran away from his Colours, and was taken lame with lying in the Fields by a *Sciatica*: I mean, Sir, the *strapado*. After which, by a second retreat, indeed running away, he scambled into his Countrey, and so escap'd the Gallows; and then snap'd up his living in the City, by his Wit in cheating, pimping, and such like Arts, till the Cart and the Pillory shew'd him too publickly to the World. And so, begging being the last refuge, he enter'd into our Society. And now lives honestly, I must needs say as the best of us.

*Spr.* Thou speak'st good Language too.

*1 Beg.* He was a Courtier born, Sir, and begs on pleasure I assure you, refusing great and constant means from able Friends to make him a staid man. Yet (the want of a Leg notwithstanding) he trust travel in this kind against all common reason, by the special policy of Providence.

*Spr.* As how, I prethee?

*1 Beg.* His Father, Sir, was a Courtier; a great Court-Beggar I assure you; I made these Verses of Him and his Son here.

A Courtier begg'd by Covetise, not Need,

From Others that, which made them beg indeed.

He begg'd, till wealth had laden him with cares

To keep for's Children and their Children shares:

While

While the oppress'd, that lost that great Estate  
 Sent Curses after it unto their Fate.  
 The Father dies (the world says) very rich;  
 The Son, 'being gotten while (it seems) the inch  
 Of begging was upon the Courty Sire,  
 Or bound by Fate, will to no wealth aspire,  
 Tho' offer'd him in Money, Cloaths or Mear,  
 More than he begs, or instantly must eat.  
 Is not he Heavenly blest, that hates Earths Treasure  
 And begs, with *What's a Gentleman but's pleasure?*  
 Or say it be upon the Heir a Curse;  
 What's that to him? The Beggar's ne'r the worse.  
 For of the general store that Heaven has sent  
 He values not a penny till't be spent.

*All. a Scribble, a Scribble!*

*2 Beg.* What City or Court-Poet could say more than our Hedge  
 Muse-monger here?

*2 Beg.* What say, Sir, to our Poet Scribble here?

*Spr.* I like his vain exceeding well, and the whole Consort of you.

*2 Beg.* Consort, Sir. We have *Musicians* too among us: True *merry Beggars*  
 indeed, that being within the reach of the Lash for singing libellous Songs  
 at London, were fain to flie into our Cove, and here they sing all our  
 Poets Ditties. They can sing any thing most tuneably, Sir, but Psalms.  
 What they may do hereafter under a triple Tree, is much expected. But  
 they live very civilly and gently among us.

*Spr.* But what is he there? that solemn old fellow, that neither speaks  
 of himself, nor any body for him.

*2 Beg.* O Sir, the rarest man of all. He is a *Prophet*. See how he  
 holds up his Prognosticating Nose. He is divining now.

*Spr.* How? a *Prophet*?

*2 Beg.* Yes Sir, a cunning-man and a Fortune-teller: 'tis thought he was  
 a great Clark before his decay, but he is very close, will not tell his be-  
 ginning, nor the fortune he himself is fallen from: But he serves us for a  
 Clergy-man still, and marries us, if need be, after a new way of his own.

*Spr.* How long have you had his Company?

*2 Beg.* But lately come amongst us, but a very ancient Scrowle all the  
 Land over, and has Travell'd with *Gipsies*, and is a *Parrot*. Shall he read  
 your Fortune Sir?

*Spr.* If it please him?

*Par.* Lend me your hand, Sir.

*By this Pohn I understand,*

*Thou art born to Weakh and Land,*

*And after many a bitter gust,*

*Shalt build with thy great Grandfires dust.*

*Spr.* Where shall I find it? but come, I'll not trouble my self with  
 the search.

*2 Beg.* What say, Sir, to our Crew? are we not well Congregated?

*Spr.* You



*Spr.* You are *A Jovial Crew*: the only people whose happiness I admire.

*3 Beg.* Will you make us happy in serving you? have you any Enemies?  
*Shall we fight under you? will you be our Captain?*

*2 Beg.* Nay, our King.

*3 Beg.* Command us something, Sir.

*Spr.* Where's the next Rendezvous?

*2 Beg.* Neither in Village nor in Town:  
 But three mile off at *Maple-down*.

*Spr.* At Evening there I'll visit you.

## Song.

**C**ome, come; away: The Spring  
 ( By every Bird that can but sing,

Or chirp a Note ) doth now invite

Us forth, to taste of his delight.

In Field, in Grove, on Hill, in Dale,

But above all the Nightringale:

Who in her sweetness strives t'out-do

The loudness of the hoarse Cuckoe:

Cuckoe cries he, Jug Jug Jug sings she,

From bush to bush, from tree to tree,

Why in one place then tarry we?

Come away; why do we stay?

We have no debt or rent to pay.

No bargains or accounts to make;

Nor Land or Lease to let or take:

Or if we had, should that remove us,

When all the World's our own before us,

And where we pass, and make resort,

It is our Kingdom and our Court.

Cuckoe cries he, &c.

*Ex. Commandant*

*Spr.* So, now away.

They dream of happiness that live in State,

But they enjoy it that obey their Fate.

## A C T. II.

*Vincen, Hildard, Meriel, Rachel.*

*Vin.* I Am overcome with admiration, at the felicity they take!

*Hil.* Beggars! They are the only People, can boast the benefit of a Free-State, in the full enjoyment of Liberty, Mirth and Ease: having all things in common, and nothing wanting of Nature's whole provision within the reach of their desires. Who would have lost this sight of their Revels?

*Vin.* How think you Ladies? Are they not the only happy in a Nation?

*Mer.* Happier than we I'm sure, that are pent up and tyed by the Nose to the continual steam of hot Hospitality, here in our Father's House, when they have the Air at pleasure in all variety.

*Ra.* And though I know we have merrier Spirits than they, yet to live thus confin'd, stifles us.

*Hil.* Why Ladies, you have Liberty enough; or may take what you please.

*Mer. Yes*

*Mer.* Yes in our Father's Rule and Government, or by his Allowance. What's that to Absolute Freedom, such as the very Beggars have, to Feast and Revel here to day, and yonder to morrow, next day where they please; and so on still, the whole Country or Kingdom over? There's Liberty! the Birds of the Air can take no more.

*Ra.* And then at home here, or whereſoever he comes, our Father is ſo penſive, (what muddy ſpirit ſoe'r poſſeſſes him, would I could conjure't out) that he makes us even ſick of his Sadneſs, that were wont to ſee my *Gh ſhips cock to day; moult Cock bread; dance clatter-deponch; and Hannykin booby; bind barrels;* or do any thing before him, and he would laugh at us.

*Mer.* Now he never looks upon us, but with a ſigh, or tears in his Eys, tho' we ſimper never ſo ſanctifiedly. What Tales have been told him of us, or what he ſuſpects I know not; God forgive him, I do; but I am weary of his houſe.

*Ra.* Does he think us Whores too, becauſe ſometimes we talk as lightly as great Ladies. I can ſwear ſafely for the Virginity of one of us, ſo far as Word and Deed goes; marry Thought's free.

*Mer.* Which is that one of us I pray? your ſelf or me?

*Ra.* Good Siſter *Meriel*, Charity begins at home. But I'll ſwear as charitably of thee: And not only becauſe thou art a year younger neither.

*Mer.* I am beholden to you. But for my Father, I would I knew his grief and how to cure him, or that we were where we could not ſee it. It ſpoys our Mirth, and that has been better than his Meat to us.

*Vin.* Will you hear our motion Ladies?

*Mer.* Plew, you would Marry us preſently out of his way, becauſe he has given you a fooliſh kind of Promise: But we will ſee him in a better humour firſt, and as apt to laugh as we to lye down, I warrant him.

*Hill.* 'Tis like that courſe will cure him, would you embrace it.

*Ra.* We will have him cur'd firſt, I tell you: And you ſhall wait that ſeaſon, and our leaſure.

*Mer.* I will rather hazard my being one of the Devil's Apoſtles, than ~~to marry while he is melancholly.~~

*Ra.* Or I to ſtay in his Houſe; to give Entertainment to this Knight, or ſother Coxcomb, that comes to cheat him up with Eating of his Chear: when we muſt fetch 'em ſweet-meats, and they muſt tell us, Ladies, Your Lips are ſweeter, and then fall into Courtſhip, one in a ſet ſpeech taken out of *old Britain's Works*, another with Verſes out of the *Academy of Compliments*, or ſome or other of the New Poetical Pamphlets, ambitious only to ſpoil Paper, and publiſh their Names in Print. And then to be kiſſ'd, and ſometimes flaver'd—ſigh.

*Mer.* 'Tis not to be indur'd. We muſt out of the Houſe. We cannot live but by laughing, and that aloud, and no body ſad within hearing.

*Vin.* We are for any Adventure with you, Ladies. Shall we project a Journey for you? your Father has truſted you, and will think you ſafe in our Company; and we would fain be abroad upon ſome Progreſs with you. Shall we make a ſting to London, and ſee how the Spring appears there in the *Spring Garden*, and in *Hide-Park*, to ſee the Races, Horſe and Foot; to hear the *Jockey crack*; and ſee the *Adamites* run naked afore the Ladies?

*Ra.* We

*Ra.* We have seen all already there, as well as they, last Year.

*Hil.* But there ha' been New *Plays* since.

*Ra.* No: no: we are not for *London*.

*Hil.* What think you of a Journey to the *Bath* then?

*Ra.* Worse than t'other way. I love not to carry my Health where others drop their Discaſes. There's no ſport i' that.

*Vin.* Will you up to the hill top of ſports, then, and Meriments, *Dowry Olimpics*, or the *Cotswold Games*.

*Mer.* No, that will be too publick for our Recreation. We would have it more within our ſelves.

*Hil.* Think of ſome courſe your ſelves then. We are for you upon any way, as far as Horſe and Money can carry us.

*Vin.* I, and if thoſe means failes us, as far as our Legs can bear, or our Hands can help us.

*Ra.* And we will put you to't. Come aſide *Meriel* ----

*Aſide.*

*Vin.* Some jeere, perhaps to put upon us.

*Hil.* What think you of a Pilgrimage to *St. Winfrides Well*?

*Vin.* Or a Journey to the Wife Woman at *Nantwich*, to Ask if we be fit Huſbands for 'em?

*Hil.* They are not ſcrupulous in that, we having had their growing Loves up from our Childhoods; and the Old *Squire's* good will before all men.

*Ra.* Me. Ha ha ha---

*Vin.* What's the Conceit I marvel.

*Ra.* Me. Ha ha ha---

*Hil.* Some merry one it ſeems.

*Ra.* And then, ſtirrah *Meriel*---Heark agen---ha ha ha.

*Vin.* How they are taken with it!

*Mer.* Ha ha ha---Heark agen *Rachel*.

*Hil.* Some wonderful Nothing ſure. They will laugh as much to ſee a Swallow ſlie with a white Feather imp'd in her Tail.

*Vin.* They were born laughing I think. *Ra.* Me. Ha ha ha---

*Vin.* If it be not ſome Trick put upon us, which they'll diſcover in ſome monſtrous ſhape, they cozen me. Now Ladies, is your Project ripe? poſſeſs us with the knowledge of it.

*Ra.* It is more precious, than to be imparted upon a ſlight demand.

*Hil.* Pray let us hear it. You know we are your truſty Servants.

*Vin.* And have kept all your Counſels ever ſince we have been Infant-Playfellows.

*Ra.* Yes you have plaid at all kinds of ſmall Game with us; but this is to the purpoſe. Ha ha ha---

*Hil.* It ſeems ſo by your Laughing.

*Ra.* And asks a ſtronger tongue-tie than tearing of Books; burning of Samplers; making Dirt-pies; or piſs and paddle in't.

*Vin.* You know how, and what we have vow'd: to wait upon you any way, any how, and any whither.

*Mer.* And you will ſtand to't?

*Hil.* I, And go to't with you, wherever it be.

*Mer.* Pray tellt 'em, *Sister Rachel*.

*Ra.* Why Gentlemen---ha ha---Thus it is---Tell it you *Meriel*.

*Vin.* O, is that all? *Mer.* You are the Elder. Pray tell it you.

*Ra.* You are the Younger. I command you tell it. Come out with it. They long to have it.

*Hil.* When? *Vin.* When?

*Mer.* Int'reth you must tell it, Sister, I cannot. Pray begin.

*Ra.* Then Gentlemen stand your ground.

*Vin.* Some terrible business sure!

*Ra.* You seem'd e'n now to admire the felicity of *Beggars*.

*Mer.* And have engag'd your selves to joyn with us in any course.

*Ra.* Will you now with us, and for our sakes turn *Beggars*?

*Mer.* It is our Resolution, and our Injunction on you.

*Ra.* But for a Time, and a short Progress.

*Mer.* And for a spring-trick of youth, now, in the season.

*Vin.* *Beggars*! What Rogues are these?

*Hil.* A simple tryal of our Loves and Service!

*Ra.* Are you resolv'd upon't? If not God bw'y'. We are resolv'd to take our course.

*Mer.* Let yours be to keep counsel.

*Vin.* Stay, stay. *Beggars*! Are we not so already?

Do we not beg your loves, and your enjoyings?

Do we not beg to be receiv'd your Servants?

To kiss your hands, or (if you will vouchsafe)

Your Lips; or your Embraces?

*Hil.* We now beg,

That we may fetch the Rings and Priests to marry us.

Wherein are we no *Beggars*?

*Ra.* That will not serve. Your time's not come for that yet.

You shall beg *Viduals* first.

*Vin.* O, I conceive your begging progress is to ramble out this Summer among your Father's Tenents; and 'tis in request among Gentlemens Daughters to devour their Cheese-cakes, Apple-pies, Cream and Custards, Flapiacks, and Pan-puddings.

*Mer.* Not so, not so,

*Hil.* Why so we may be a kind of civil *Beggars*.

*Ra.* I mean stark, errant, downright *Beggars*, I,

Without equivocations; Statute *Beggars*.

*Mer.* Couchant and Passant, Guardant, Rampant *Beggars*.

*Vin.* Current and Vagrant— *Hil.* Stockant, whippant *Beggars*!

*Vin.* Must you and we be such? would you so have it?

*Ra.* Such as we saw so merry; and you concluded

Were th'only happy People in a Nation.

*Mer.* The onely Freemen of a Common-wealth;

Free above *Scot-free*; that observe no Law,

Obeys no Governour, use no Religion,

But what they draw from their own ancient custom,

Or constitute themselves, yet are no Rebels.

*Ra.* Such as of all mens Meats and all mens Money

Take a free part; and, wherefoe'r they travel,

Have all things *gratis* to their hands provided.

*Vin.*



*Vin.* Course fare most times.

*Ra.* Their Stomach makes it good;  
And feasts on that, which others scorn for Food.

*Mer.* The Antidote, Content, is only theirs.  
And, unto that, such full delights are known,  
That they conceive the Kingdom is their own.

*Vin.* Fore Heaven I think they are in earnest: for they were always mad.

*Hil.* And we were madder then they, if we should lose 'em.

*Vin.* 'Tis but a mad trick of youth (as they say) for the Spring, or a short  
Progress: and mirth may be made out of it; knew we how to carry it.

*Ra.* Pray Gentlemen be sudden.  
Heark, you hear the Cuckoe.

*Cuckoe.*

*Hil.* We are most resolutely for you in your course.

*Vin.* But the vexation is how to set it on foot.

*Ra.* We have projected it. Now if you be perfect and constant Lovers  
and Friends, search you the means. We have puzzell'd 'em.

*Mr.* I am glad on't. Let 'em pump.

*Vin.* Troth a small stock will serve to set up withall. This Doublet sold  
off o' my Back, might serve to furnish a Camp Royal of us.

*Hil.* But how to enter or arrange our selves into the Crew will be the  
difficulty. If we light raw and tame amongst 'em (like Cage-Birds among  
a flight of wild ones) we shall never pick up a Living, but have our  
brains peckt out.

*Vin.* We want instruction dearly.

*Enter Springlove.*

*Hil.* O here comes *Springlove*. His great Benefactorship among the Beggars  
might prefer us with Authority into a ragged Regiment presently. Shall  
I put it to him.

*Ra.* Take heed what you do. His greatness with my Father will be-  
tray us.

*Vin.* I will cut his Throat then. My noble *Springlove*, the great Com-  
mander of the *Maunder*s, and King of *Canter*s, we saw the gratitude of your  
Loyal Subjects, in the large Tributary content they gave you in their  
Revels.

*Spr.* Did you, Sir?

*Hil.* We have seen all with great delight and admiration.

*Spr.* I have seen you too, kind Gentlemen and Ladies; and over-heard you  
in your quaint design, to new create your selves out of the worldly blessings,  
and spiritual graces Heaven has bestow'd upon you, to be partakers and Co-  
asters too, in those vile courses, which you call delights, ta'ne by those despi-  
cable and abhorred Creatures.

*Vin.* Thou art a Despiser, nay a Blasphemer  
Against the Maker of those happy Creatures:

Who, of all humane, have priority

In their content. In which they are so blest

That they enjoy most in possessing least.

Who made 'em such, dost think? or why so happy?

*Ra.* He grows zealous in the Cause: sure he'll beg in de'd.

*Hil.* Art thou an Hypocrite, then, all this while?

Only pretending *Charity*; or using it  
 To get a Name and Praise unto thy self;  
 And not to cherish and increase those *Creatures*  
 In their most happy way of living? Or  
 Dost thou bestow thine Alms with a foul purpose  
 To stint their Begging, and with loss to buy  
 And slave those free souls from their liberty?

*Mar.* They are more zealous in the Cause than we.

*Spr.* But are you, Ladies, at defiance too  
 With Reputation, and the Dignity  
 Due to your Father's House and You?

*Ra.* Hold thy peace, good *Springlove*.  
 And tho' you seem to dislike this course, and reprove us for it,  
 Do not betray us in it: your throats in question.  
 I tell you for good will, good *Springlove*.

*Mar.* What wouldst thou have us do? Thou talk'st o'th' House: 'Tis a base  
 melancholly House, our Father's sadness banishes us out o't. And, for the  
 delight thou tak'st in *Beggars* and their brawls, thou canst not but think they  
 live a better life abroad, than we do in this House.

*Spr.* I have sounded your Faith: And I am glad I find you all right. And  
 for your Father's sadness, I'll tell you the cause o't. I over-heard it but this  
 day in his private Discourse with his merry Mate Master *Heart*. He has been  
 told by some *Wizard* that you both were born to be *Beggars*.

*All.* How, how!

*Spr.* For which he is so tormented in mind, that he cannot sleep in peace,  
 nor look upon you but with hearts grief. *Vin.* This is most strange.

*Ra.* Let him be griev'd then, till we are *Beggars*,  
 We have just reason to become so now:  
 And, what we thought on but in jest before,  
 We'll do in earnest now.

*Spr.* O, I applaud this resolution in you;  
 We would have perswaded it, will be your Servant in't.  
 For look ye Ladies:

The Sentence of your Fortune does not say, that you shall beg for need; hun-  
 gry or cold necessity. If therefore you expose your selves on pleasure into it,  
 you shall absolve your destiny nevertheless, and cure your Father's grief; I  
 am over-joy'd to think o't; and will assist you faithfully.

*All.* A *Springlove*! a *Springlove*!

*Spr.* I am prepar'd already for th' adventure.  
 And will with all conveniencies furnish,  
 And set you forth; give you your Dimensions,  
 Rules and Directions: I will be your Guide,  
 Your Guard, your Convoy, your Authority.  
 You do not know my Power; my Command  
 O'th' *Beggars* Commonwealth.

*Vin.* But how? But how? good *Springlove*?

*Spr.* I'll confess all. In my Minority  
 My Master took me up a naked *Beggar*.

Bred me at School ; then took me to his service ;  
 (You know in what good fashion) and you may  
 Collect to memory for seven late Summers,  
 Either by leave, pretending Friends to see  
 At far remote parts of the Land, or else,  
 By stealth, I would absent my self from service,  
 To follow my own Pleasure, which was Begging,  
 Led to't by Nature. My indulgent Master  
 (Yet ignorant of my course) on my submission  
 When Cold and Hunger forc'd me back at Winter,  
 Receiv'd me still again. Till, two years since,  
 He being drawn by journey towards the North,  
 Where I then quarter'd with a ragged Crew ;  
 On the high-way, not dreaming of him there,  
 I did accost him, with a *God your Worship*  
*The Gnist one small penny to a Creeple ;*  
 (Forhere I was with him) and the good Lord  
 To bless you, and restore it you in Heaven.

(Hails.

All. Ha, ha, ha.

*Spr.* My head was dirty clouted, and this leg  
 Swaddled with Rags, the other naked, and  
 My body clad, like his upon the Gibbet.  
 Yet He, with searching eyes, through all my Rags  
 And counterfeit Postures, made discovery  
 Of his Man *Springlove*; chid me into tears ;  
 And a confession of my forespent life.  
 At last, upon condition, that vagary  
 Should be the last, he gave me leave to run  
 That *Summer* out. In *Autumn* home came I  
 In my home Cloaths again and former Duty.  
 My Master not alone conserv'd my Counsel,  
 But lays more weighty Trust and Charge upon me ;  
 Such was his love to keep me a home-Man,  
 That he conferr'd his Stewards place upon me,  
 Which clog'd me, the last year, from those Delights,  
 I would not lose again to be his Lord.

All. A *Springlove*, a *Springlove*.

*Spr.* Pursue the course you are on then, as cheerfully  
 As the inviting season smiles upon you.  
 Think how you are necessitated to it,  
 To quit your Father's sadness, and his fears  
 Touching your *Fortune*. Till you have been *Beggars*  
 The Sword hangs over him. You cannot think  
 Upon an Act of greater Piety  
 Unto your Father, than t' expose your selves  
 Brave Volunteers, unpres'd by common need  
 Into this meritorious Warfare ; whence  
 (After a few days, or short season spent)

You

You bring him a perpetual Peace and Joy  
 By expiating the Prophecy that torments him.  
 'Twere worth your Time in painful, woful steps,  
 With your lives hazard in a Pilgrimage,  
 So to redeem a Father. But you'll find  
 A Progress of such Pleasure (as I'll govern't.)  
 That the most happy Courts could never boast  
 In all their Trappings on the Countries coast;  
 Whose envy we shall draw, when they shall read  
 We out-beg them, and for as little Need.

*All. A Spring-Love? a Spring-Love!*

*Spr.* Follow me, Gallants, then, as cheerfully  
*As---* (heark) we are summon'd forth.

*All.* We follow thee.---

(*Birds singing.*  
*Exeunt.*

*Enter Randal A Purse in his hand.*

*Ran.* Well, go thy waies. If ever any just or charitable Steward was commended, sure thou shalt be at the last Quarter-day. Here's five and twenty Pounds for this Quarters Beggars-charge. And (if he return not by the end of this Quarter) here's Order to a Friend to supply for the next. If I now should venture for the commendation of an unjust Steward, and turn this money to mine own use! ha! dear Devil tempt me not. I'll do thee service in a greater matter. But to rob the Poor! (a poor trick) every Church-warden can do't. Now something whispers me, that my Master, for his Stewards love, will supply the Poor, as I may handle the matter. Then I rob the Steward, if I restore him not the Money at his return. Away Temptation, leave me. I am frail flesh, yet I will fight with thee. But say the Steward never return. O but he will return. Perhaps he may not return. Turn from me *Satan*: strive not to clog my Conscience. I would not have this weight upon't for all thy Kingdom.

*Enter Hearty singing, and Oldrents. Hey down bey down a down, &c.*

Remember, Sir, your Covenant to be merry.

*Old.* I strive you see to be so.

Yet something pricks me within, methinks.

*Hea.* No further thought, I hope, of *Farrunes* tell-tales.

*Old.* I think not of 'em. Nor will I preface,

That when a disposition of sadness

Or clouds my spirits, I shall therefore hear

All News, or shortly meet with some disaster.

*Hea.* Nay, when a man meets with bad tydings, why

May not he then compel his mind to mirth;

As well as pulling Stomachs are made strong

By eating against Appetite?

*Old.* Forc'd Mirth tho' is not good.

*Hea.* It relishes not you'll say. No more do's Meat

That is most savory, to a long sick stomach,

Unill by Srise and Custom 'tis made good.



*Old.* You argue well. But do you see yond Fellow?

*Hea.* I never noted him so sad before.

He neither sings nor whistles.

*Old.* Something troubles him.

Can he force Mirth out of himself, now, think you?

*Hea.* What speak you of a Clod of Earth; a Hind?

But one degree above a Beast, compar'd

To th' airy spirit of a Gentleman?

*Old.* He looks, as he came laden with ill News,

To meet me on my way.

*Hea.* 'Tis very pretty.

Suppose the Ass be tir'd with sadness: will you dis-burden him.

To load your self? Think of your Covenant to be merry

In spite of *Fortune* and her Riddle-makers.

*Old.* Why how now *Randal*? sad? where's *Springlove*?

*Hea.* He's ever in his Care. But that I know

The Old *Squire's* virtue, I shou'd think *Springlove*

Were sure his Bastard.

*Ran.* Here's his Money, Sir.

I pray that I be charg'd with it no longer.

The Devil and I have strain'd courtesie these two hours about it. I would

not be corrupted with the trust of more than is mine own. Mr. Steward

gave it me, Sir, to order it for the *Beggars*. He has made me Steward of the

Barn and them, while he is gone (he says) a Journey, to survey and measure

Lands abroad about the Countreys, Some Purchase I think for your *Worship*.

*Old.* I know his measuring of Land. He is gone his old way.

And let him go. Am not I merry *Hearty*?

*Hea.* Yes; but not hearty merry. There's a *Whim* now.

*Old.* The Poor's Charge shall be mine. Keep you the Money for him.

*Ran.* Mine is the greater Charge then.

Knew you but my Temptations and my Care,

You would discharge me of it. *Old.* Ha ha ha.

*Ra.* I have not had it so many minutes, as I have been in several Min's about it; and most of them dishonest.

*Old.* Go then, and give it to one of my Daughters to keep for *Springlove*?

*Ran.* O, I thank your *Worship*----

*Exit.*

*Old.* Alas poor knave! How hard a Tasque it is to alter Custom!

*Hea.* And how easie for money to corrupt it.

What a pure *Treasurer* would he make?

*Old.* All were not born for weighty Offices.

VVhich makes me think of *Springlove*.

He might have tane his leave tho'.

*Hea.* I hope he's run away with some large Trust,

I never lik'd such demure down-look'd Fellows.

*Old.* You are deceiv'd in him.

*Hea.* If you be not tis well. But this is from the Covenant.

*Old.* VVell Sir, I will be merry. I am resolv'd

To force my Spirit only unto Mirth.

Should.

ould I hear now, my Daughters were miss'd  
run away, I would not send a sigh  
To fetch 'em back.

*1. To'ther old Song for that.*

*Song.*

**T**here was an old fellow at Waltham Cross,  
Who merrily sung when he liv'd by the Loss.  
He never was heard to sing with Hey-ho :  
But sent it out with a Haigh trolly lo.  
He cheer'd up his Heart, when his Goods went to wrack,  
With a heghm boy, heghm, and a Cup of old Sack.

*Old.* Is that the way on't? well, it shall be mine then. *Enter Randal.*

*Ran.* My Mistresses are both abroad, Sir.

*Old.* How? since when?

*Ran.* On foot, Sir, two hours since, with the two Gentlemen their Lovers.  
Here's a Letter they left with the Butler. And there's a muttering in the House.

*Old.* I will not read, nor open it; but conceive

Within my self the worst that can befall them;

That they are lost and no more mine. What follows?

That I am happy: all my cares are flown.

The Counsel I anticipated from

My Friend, shall serve to set my Rest upon

(Without all further helps) to jovial Mirth:

Which I will force out of my spleen so freely,

That Grief shall lose her name, where I have being;

And sadness, from my furthest foot of Land,

While I have life, be banish'd. *Hea.* What's the *whim* now?

*Old.* My Tenants shall sit Rent free for thistwelve-month;

And all my Servants have their wages doubled;

And so shall be my charge in House-keeping.

I hope my friends will find and put me to't.

*Hea.* For them I'll be your Undertaker, Sir.

But this is over-dore, I do not like it.

*Old.* And forthy news, the Money that thou hast,

Is now thine own. I'll make it good to Springlove.

Be sad with it, and leave me. For I tell thee,

I'll purge my house of stupid melancholly.

*Ran.* I'll be as merry as the Charge that's under me.

*A confused noise within of laughing and singing, and one crying out.*

The Beggars, Sir. Do ye hear 'em in the Barn?

*Old.* I'll double their allowance too; that they may

Double their Numbers, and increase their Noise:

These Bear not sound enough: and one (me thought)

Cry'd out among 'em.

*Ran.* By a most natural Cause. For there's a Doxy

Has been in labour, Sir. And 'tis their Custome,

With Songs and shouts to drown the womans cries.

A Ceremony which they use, not for  
Devotion, but to keep off Notice of  
The work they have in hand. Now she is in  
The straw it seems; and they are quiet.

*Hea.* The straw! that's very proper there. That's *Randal's whim.*

*Old.* We will have such a lying in, and such  
A Christning, such up-sitting and Gossiping!  
I mean to send forty mile Circuit at the least,  
To draw in all the *Beggars* can be found;  
And such Devices we will have for jollity,  
As *Fame* shall boast to all *Posterity.*

Am I not merry *Hearty*? hearty merry?

*Hea.* VVould you were else. I fear this over-doing.

*Old.* I'll do't for expiation of a crime  
That's charg'd upon my Conscience till't be done.

*Hea.* VVhat's that? what says he?

*Old.* VVe will have such a Festival month on't, *Randal.*

*Ran.* Sir, you may spare the labour and the cost:  
They'll never thank you for't. They'll not endure  
A Ceremony, that is not their own,  
Belonging either to the Child, or Mother.  
A month Sir? They'll not be drain'd so long  
For your Estate. Their work is done already:  
The Bratling's born, the *Doxey's* in the *Strummel*,  
Laid by an *Autum Mort* of their own Crew,  
That serv'd for Mid-wife: and the Child-bed woman  
Eating of hasty-Pudding for her supper,  
And the Child part of it for pap  
I warrant you by this time; then to sleep;  
So to rise early to regain the strength  
By travel, which she lost by travail.

*Hea.* There's *Randal* again. *Old.* Can this be?

*Ran.* She'll have the *Baniling* at her back to morrow  
That was to day in her belly, and march a foot-back with it.

*Hea.* Art there again, old *Randal*?

*Ran.* And for their Gossiping (now you are so nigh)  
If you'll look in, I doubt not, but you'll find 'em  
At their high Feast already. *Hea.* Pray let's see 'em, Sir.

*Randal opens the Scene.* *The Beggars discovered at their Feast.* *After they have so-  
bled a while at their Vittuals: This Song.*

**H**ere, safe in our Skipper, let's cly off our Peck,  
And bowle in defiance o'th' Harman-beck.  
Here's Panum and Lap, and good Poplars of Yarrum,  
To fill up the Crib, and to comfort the Quarron.

Now bowle a round health to the Go-well and Com well  
Of Cisle Bumtrincket that lies in the Strummel.

Now bowle a round health to the Go-well and Com well  
Of Cisle Bumtrincket that lies in the Strummel.

Here's Ruffpock and Casson, and all of the best.  
 And Scraps of the Dainties of Gentry Cofe's Feast.  
 Here's Grunter and Bleater, with Tib of the Buttry,  
 And Margery Prater, a'l drift without flattery.

For all this bene Cribbing and Peck let us then,  
 Bowle a health to the Gentry Cofe of the Ken.  
 Now bowle a round health to the Go-well and Com-well  
 Of Cisley Bumtrinker that lies in the Strummel.

Old. Good Heaven how merry they are.

Hea. Be not you sad at that.

Old. Sad *Hearty*, no unless it be with envy  
 At their full happiness. What is an Estate  
 Of Wealth and Power, ballanc'd with their Freedom,  
 But a meer load of outward complement?  
 When they enjoy the Fruits of rich Content?  
 Our Dross but weighs us down into Despair,  
 While their sublimed spirits dance ith' Air.

Hea. I ha' not so much Wealth to weigh me down,  
 Nor so little (*I thank Chance*.) as to dance naked.

Old. True my Friend *Hearty*, thou having less than I,  
 (Of which I boast not) art the merrier man:

But they exceed thee in that way so far,

That should I know, my Children now were Beggars

(Which yet I will not read) I must conclude,

They were not lost, nor I to be agriev'd.

Hea. If this be madness, 'tis a merry fit.

Enter *Patrico*. Many of the Beggars look out.

*Pat.* Toure out with your Glaspers, I swear by the *Ruffin*,  
 That we are assaulted by a quire Cuffin.

*Ran.* Hold! what d'e mean, my friends? This is our Master.  
 The Master of your Feast and Feasting-House.

*Pat.* Is this the Gentry Cofe?

All the Beggars. Lord bleis his Worship. His good  
 Worship. Bleis his Worship.

Exit Beggars manner *Pat.*

*Pat.* Now, bounteous Sir, before you go,

Hear me, the Beggar *Patrico*:

Or Priest, if you do rather chuse,

That we no word of Canting use,

Long may you live, and may your store

Never decay, nor baulk the Poor:

And as you more in years do grow,

May Treasure to your Coffers flow;

And may your Care no more th on

Be set, than ours are, that have none.

But as your Riches do increase,

So may your hearts Content and Peace.

And



And after many, many years,  
 When the Poor have quit their *Feats*  
 Of losing you, and that with *Heaven*  
 And all the World you have made *even*,  
 Then may your blest Posterity,  
 Age after Age successively,  
 Untill the World shall be untwin'd  
 Inherit your Estate and Mind.  
 So shall the Poor to the last day,  
 For you in your succession, Pray.

*H.a.* 'Tis a good Vote, *Sir Patrico*: but you are too grave.  
 Let us hear and see something of your merry *Grigs*, that can sing, play *Game*,  
 bals, and do feats.

*Pat.* Sir I can lay my Function by,  
 And talk as wild and wantonly  
 As *Tom*, or *Tib*, or *Jack*, or *Jill*,  
 When they at *Bowling* *Ken* do swill.  
 Will you therefore daign to hear  
 My *Autum Mort*, with Throat as clear,  
 As was Dame *Anisses* of the Name;  
 How sweet in Song her Notes she'll frame,  
 That when she chides, as loud is yawning,  
 As *Chanticleere* wak'd by the dawning.

*Hea.* Yes, pray let's hear her. What is she your wife?

*Pat.* Yes Sir, we of our Ministry,  
 As well as those oth' *Presbyteric*,  
 Takes Wives and defie Dignitie.

*Exit.*

*Hea.* A learned Cleark in veritie?

*Enter Patrico with his Old Wife, with a wooden Bowle of Drink.*

*She is drunk.*

*Pat.* By *Salmon*, I think my Mort is in drink,  
 I find by her stink; and the pretty pretty plink  
 Of her Neyes, that half wink,  
 That the tipling Feast, with the *Do* is in the Neast,  
 Hath turn'd her brain to a merry merry vain.

*Mort.* Go Fiddle *Patrico*, and let me sing. First set me down here on both  
 my *Prats*. Gently, gently, for cracking of my wind, now I must use it.  
 Hem, hem.

*She sings.*

**T**His is *Bien Bowse*, this is *Bien Bowse*,

Too little is my *Skew*.

I bowse no *Lage*, but a whole *Gage*  
 Of this I'll bowse to you.

This Bowse is better than *Rom-bowse*,

It sets the *Gan* a giggling;

The *Autum-Mort* finds better sport

In bowling than in nigling.

This is *Bien-bowse*, &c.

*She tosses off her Bowls, falls back, and is carried out.*

**Bar.** So so: your part is done—

*Exit with her.*

**Hea.** How find you, Sir, your self?

**Old.** Wondrous merry, my good *Hearty*.

*Enter Patrico.*

**Pat.** I wish we had, in all our store,  
Something that could please you more.

The Old or *Autum-Mort's* a sleep;

But before the young ones creep

Into the straw, Sir, if you are,

(As Gallants sometimes love course fare,

So it be fresh and wholesome Ware)

Dispos'd to *Doxie*, or a *Dill*,

That never yet with man did Mell;

Of whom no *Upright man* is taster,

I'll present her to you, Master.

**Old.** Away. You would be punish'd. Oh.

**Hea.** How is it with you, Sir?

**Old.** A sudden qualm over-chills my Stomach.

But 'twill away.

*Enter Dancers.*

**Pat.** See, in their rags, then, dauncing for your sports,  
Our *Clipper Dugcons* and their *walking Moris*.

*Dance.*

**Pat.** You have done well. Now let each *Tripper*

Make a retreat into the *Skipper*;

And couch a *Hog's-head*, till the dark-man's past;

Then all with Bag and Baggage *bing awast*.

*Exeunt Beggars.*

**Ran.** I told you, Sir, they would be gone to morrow.  
I understand their Canting.

**Old.** Take that amongst you——*Gives Money.*

**Pat.** May rich Plenty so you bless,

Tho' you still give, you ne're have less.

*Exit.*

**Hea.** And as your walks may lead this way:

Pray strike in here another day.

So you may go, Sir *Patrico*—

How think you, Sir? or what? or why do you think at all, unless on Sack  
and Supper-time? do you fall back? do you not know the danger of Re-  
lapses?

**Old.** Good *Hearty*, thou mistak'st me. I was thinking upon this *Patrico*. And  
that he has more Soul than a born Beggar in him.

**Hea.** Rogue enough though, to offer us his what d'ecals? his *Doxies*.  
Heart and a Cup of Sack, do we look like old Beggar-niggers?

**Old.** Pray forbear that Language.

**Hea.** Will you then talk of Sack, that can drown fighting? will you in-  
to Supper, and take me there your Guest? Or must I creep into the  
Barn among your welcome ones?

**Old.** You have rebuk'd me timely; and most friendly.

*Exit.*

**Hea.** Would all were well with him.

*Exit.*

**Ran.** It is with me.

For now these Pounds are (as I feel them swag)  
Light at my heart, tho' heavy in the Bag. *Exit.*

ACT

## ACT. III.

*Vincent and Hilliard in their Rags.*

*Vin.* **I**S this the Life that we admu'd in others; with envy at their happiness?

*Hil.* Pray let us make a vertuous use of it: and repent us of that deadly sin (before a greater punishment than Famine and Lice fall upon us); by steering our course homeward. Before Ele endure such another Night---

*Vin.* What? what wouldst thou do? I would thy Mistress heard thee.

*Hil.* I hope she does not. For I know there is no altering our course before they make the first motion.

*Vin.* Is't possibly we should be weary already? and before their softer Constitutions of Flesh and Blood?

*Hil.* They are the stronger in will it seems.

*Enter Springlove.*

*Spr.* How now *Comrades*! repining already at your Fulnets of Liberty? Do you complain of Ease?

*Vin.* Ease call'st thou it? Didst thou sleep to Night?

*Spr.* Not so well these Eighteen Months I swear; since my last walks.

*Hil.* Lightning and Tempest is out of thy *Letany*. Could not the Thunder wake thee?

*Spr.* Ha ha ha.

*Vin.* Nor the noise of the *Crow* in the Quarter by us?

*Hil.* Nor the Hogs in the hovel, that cryed till they drown'd the noise of the wind? If I could but once ha' dreamt in all my former Nights; that such an Affliction could have been found among *Beggars*, sure I should never have travell'd to the proof on't.

*Vin.* We look'd upon them in their Jollity, and cast no further.

*Hil.* Nor did that only draw us forth (by your favour *Vince*) but our Obedience to our Loves, which we must suffer, till they cry home agen. Are they not weary yet, as much as we dost think *Springlove*?

*Spr.* They have more moral understanding then so. They know (and so may you) this is your Birth-Night into a new world. And we all know (or have been told) that all come crying into the world, when the whole world of Pleasures is before us. The world it self had ne'r been glorious, had it not first been a confused *Chaos*.

*Vin.* Well: never did *Knight Errants* in all Adventures, merit more of their Ladies, than we *Beggar Errants* or errant Beggars, do in ours.

*Spr.* The greater will be your Reward. Think upon that. And shew no manner of distaste to turn their hearts from you. Yare undone then.

*Hil.* Are they ready to appear out of their privy Lodgings, in the Pigs Palace of Pleasure? Are they coming forth?

*Spr.* I left 'em almost ready, sitting on their Pads of straw, helping to dress each others heads (The ones eye is the others Looking-glass) with the prettiest coyte

coyl they keep to fit their fancies in the most graceful way of wearing their new Dressings, that you would admire.

*Vin.* I hope we as gracefully set out. Are we not?

*Spr.* Indifferent well. But will you fall to practice? Let me hear how you can *Maintain* when you meet with Passengers.

*Hil.* We do not look like men, I hope, too good to learn.

*Spr.* Suppose some Persons of Worth or Wealth passing by now. Note me. Good your good Worship, your Charity to the Poor, that will duly and truly pray for you day and night.

*Vin.* Away you idle Rogue, you would be set to work and whip—

*Spr.* That is lame and tick; hungry and comfortless—

*Vin.* If you were well serv'd—

*Spr.* And even to bless you and reward you for it—

*Hil.* Prethee hold thy peace (here be doleful Notes indeed) and leave us to our own *Genius*. If we must beg, let it go, as it comes, by Inspiration. I love not your set form of Begging.

*Spr.* Let me instruct ye tho'.

*Enter Rachel and Meriel in Rags.*

*Ra.* Have a care, good *Meriel*, what hearts, or limbs soever we have, and tho' never so feeble, let us set our best faces on't, and laugh our last gasp out before we discover any dislike, or weariness to them. Let us bear it out, till they complain first, and beg to carry us home a pick pack.

*Mer.* I am sorely furbated with hoofing already tho', and so crupper-crampt with our hard lodging, and so bumsided with the straw, that—

*Ra.* Think not on't. I am numm'd i' the burn and shoulders too a little. And have found the difference between a hard floor with a little straw, and a down Bed with a Quilt upon't. But no words, nor a fowre look i' prethee.

*Hil.* O here they come now; *Masam Fineshoaths*, and my Lady *Boonyrag*.

*Vin.* Peace, they see us. *Ra.* Mr. Ha ha ha.

*Vin.* We are glad the Object pleases ye. *Ra.* So does the Subject.

Now you appear the glories of the Spring Dirlings of *Phabus* and the Summers heirs.

*Hil.* How fainter, than late *Faint's* self appear (To deck the Spring) *Diana's* darling dear!

O let us not *Atton-like*, the strook (With greedy eyes while we presume to look

On your half nakedness, since courteous rags Cover the rest) into the shape of Stags.

*Ra.* *Mer.* Ha ha ha. We are glad you are so merry

*Vin.* Merry and lusty too. This night we will lye together as well as the proudest Couple in the Barn.

*Hil.* And so will we. I can hold out no longer.

*Ra.* Does the straw stir up your flesh to't, Gentlemen?

*Mer.* On does your Provender prick you?

*Spr.* What do we come for this? laugh and lye down

When you bellies are full. Remember, Ladies,

You have not begg'd yet, to quit your *Destiny*:

But have liv'd hitherto on my endeavours.

Who got your suppers, pray, last night, but I?



Of dainty Trencher-Fees, from a Gentlemans house:  
Such as the Serving-men themselves, sometimes,  
VVould have been glad of. And this morning now,  
VVhat comfortable Chippings and sweet Buttermilk  
Had you to Breakfast!

*Ra.* O 'twas excellent! I feel it good still, here.

*Mer.* There was a brown Crust amongst it, that has made my Neck so white methinks. Is it not, *Rachel*.

*Ra.* Yes. You ga'me none on't. You ever covet to have all the Beauty.  
'Tis the ambition of all younger Sisters.

*Vin.* They are pleas'd, and never like to be weary.

*Hil.* No more must we, if we'll be theirs.

*Spr.* Peace, here come Passengers. Forget not your Rules; and quickly  
disperse your selves, and fall to your Calling. — *Enter two Gentlemen.*

1. Lead the Horses down the Hill. The heat of our speed is over; for we  
have lost our Journey.

2. Had they taken this way, we had overtaken 'em, or heard of 'em at  
least.

1. But some of our Scouts will light on 'em, the whole Country being over-  
spread with 'em.

2. There was never such an escape else.

*Vin.* A search for us perhaps. Yet I know not them; nor they me, I am  
sure. I might the better beg of 'em. But how to begin, or set the worst leg  
forwards, would I were whipt if I know now.

1. That a young Gentlewoman of her breeding, and Heir to such an Estate,  
should fly from so great a Match, and run away with her Uncles Clerk!

2. The old Justice will run mad upon't, I fear.

*Vin.* If I were to be hang'd now, I could not beg for my life.

*Spr.* Step forwards and beg handsomely. I'll set my Goad i' your breech  
else. *Vin.* VVhat shall I say?

*Spr.* Have I not told you? now begin.

*Vin.* After you, good *Springlove*.

*Spr.* Good, good your *Worships*---

1. Away you idle Vagabond---

*Spr.* Your *Worships* Charity to a poor Creature wellly shur'd.

*Vin.* That will duly and truly prea for me.

2. You counterfeit Villains, hence.

*Spr.* Good Masters sweet *Worship*, for the tender mercy of---

*Vin.* Duly and truly prea for you.

1. You would be well whipt and set to work, if you were duly and truly  
serv'd.

*Vin.* Did not I say so before?

*Spr.* Good *Worshipful* Masters *Worship*, to bestow your Charity, and---to maintain  
your health and Limbs.

*Vin.* Duly and truly pray for you.

2. Be gone, I say, you impudent lusty young Rascals.

I'll set you going else.

*Switch 'em.*

*Spr.* Ab the goodness of compassion to soften your hearts to the poor.

*Vin.*

*Vin.* Oh the Devil, must not we bear 'em now? steth---

*Spr.* Nor shew an angry look for all the skin of our backs. Ah the sweetness of that mercy that gives to all, to move your compassion to the hungry, when it shall seem good unto you, and night and day to bless all that you have. Ah ah---

2. Come back sirrah. His Patience and Humility has wrought upon me.

*Vin.* Duly and---

2. Not you sirrah. The other. You look like a sturdy Rogue.

*Spr.* Lord bless you Masters Worship.

2. There's a half penny for you. Let him have no share with you.

*Vin.* I shall never thrive o'this Trade.

1. They are of a Fraternity, and will share, I warrant you.

*Spr.* Never in our lives truly. He never begg'd with me before.

1. But if Hedges or Henroosts could speak, you might be found sharers in Pillage, I believe.

*Spr.* Never saw him before, bless you good Master, in all my life. (Beg for your self. Your Credie's gone else.) Good Hea'ne to blisse and prosper yea. *Exit.*

2. Why dost thou follow us? Is it your office to be privy to our talk?

*Vin.* Sir, I beseech you hear me, (S'life what shall I say?) I am a stranger in these parts, and destitute of Means and Apparel.

1. So me thinks, and what o'that.

*Vin.* Will you therefore be pleas'd, as you are worthy Gentlemen, and blest with plenty---

2. This is Courtdy!

*Vin.* Out of your abundant store, towards my relief in extrem necessity, to furnish me with a small parcel of Money--five or six pieces, or ten, if you can presently spare it.

1. 2. Stand off.

*Draws*

*Vin.* I have spoil'd all, and know not how to beg otherwise.

1. Here's a new way of begging!

*Vin.* Quite run out of my Instructions.

2. Some High-way Thief o'my conscience, that forgets he is weaponless.

*Vin.* Only to make you merry, Gentlemen, at my unskilfulness in my new Trade. I have been another man i'my days. So I kiss your hands. *Exit.*

1. With your heels do you?

2. It had been good to have apprehended the Rake-shame. There is some mystery in his Rags. But let him go.

*Enter Oliver, putting up his Sword.*

*Ol.* You found your legs in time, I had made you halt for something else.

1. Master Oliver, well return'd what's the matter, Sir?

*Ol.* Why, Sir, a counterfeit lame-Rogue beg'd of me; but in such Language, the high Sheriffs Son o'the Sire could not have spoke better; nor to have borrowed a greater Sum. (He ask'd me if I could spare him Ten or Twenty Pound.) I switch'd him, his Cudgel was up. I drew, and into the Wood he scap'd me, as nimbly---But first he told me, I should hear from him by a Gentleman, to require satisfaction of me.

2. We had such another beg'd of us. The Court goes a begging I think.

1. Dropt through the Clouds, I think; more Lucifers Travailing to Hell, that beg by the way. Met you no News of your Kinswoman, Mistress Amie.

*Ol.* No. What's the matter with her? Goes her Marriage forwards with young

young Master *Talbot* ? I hasten'd my Journey from *London* to be at the Wedding.

2. 'Twas to ha' bin yesterday morning; all things in readines prepar'd for it. But the Bride, stoln by your Father's Clerk, is slipt away. We were in quest of 'em, and so are twenty more, several ways.

*Ol.* Such youg Wenches will have their own ways in their own Loves, what Matches soever their Guardians make for 'em. And I hope my Father will not follow the Law so close to hang his Clerk for stealing his Ward with her own Consent. It may breed such a grudge, may cause some Clerks to hang their Masters, that have 'em o' the hip of injustice. Besides, *Martin* (though he be his Servant) is a Gentleman. But, indeed, the miserablest Rascal! He will grudge her Meat when he has her.

1. Your Father is exceeding'y troubled at their escape. I wish that you may qualifie him with your Reasons.

*Ol.* But what says *Talbot* to the matter, the Bridegroom, that should ha' been?

2. Marry he says little to the purpose; but cries out-right.

*Ol.* I like him well for that: He holds his humour. A miserable wretch too, tho' Rich. I ha' known him cry when he has lost but three shillings at Mum-chance. But, Gentlemen, keep on your way to comfort my Father. I know some of his Mans private haunts about the Country here, which I will search immediately.

1. We will Accompany you, if you please.

*Ol.* No, by no means: That will be too publick.

2. Do your pleasure.

Exit 1. 2.

*Ol.* My pleasure, and all the search that I intend, is, by hovering here, to take a review of a brace of the handsomest Beggar-brushes that ever graced a Ditch or Hedge side. I past by 'em in haste, but something so possesss me, that I must---What the Devil must I? A Beggar? Why, Beggars are flesh and blood; and Rags are no Diseases. Their Lice are no French Fleas. And there is much wholsommer flesh under Countrey Dirt, than City Painting: And less danger in Dirt and Rags, than in Ceru'e and Satin. I durst not take a Touch at *London*, both for the present Cost, and fear of an After-Reckoning. But *Oliver*, dost thou speak like a Gentleman? fear Price or Pox, ha? Marry do I Sir: Nor can Beggar-Sport be inexcusable in a young Country Gentleman, short of means, for another respect, a principal one indeed; to avoid the Punishment or Charge of Bastardy: There's no commuting with them; or keeping of Children for them. The poor Whores, rather than part with their own, or want Children at all, will steal other Folks, to Travel with, and move compassion. He feeds a Beggar-wench well that fills her belly with young bones. And these reasons consider'd, good Master *Oliver*---slid yonder they are at peep. And now siten down as waiting for my purpose.

Enter *Vincent*.

Heart here's another delay. I must shift him. Dost hear honest Poor Fellow? I prethee go back presently, and at the hill foot (here's six pence for thy pains) thou shalt find a Footman with a Horse in his hand. Bid him wait there. His Master will come presently, say.

*Vin.* Sir, I have a business of another nature to you. Which (as I presume you are a Gentleman of right Noble Spirit and Resolution) you will receive without offence; and in that respect as most properly appertains to the most *Herrick* natures.

*Ol.* Thy Language makes me wonder at thy Person. What's the matter with thee? quickly.

*Vin.* You may be pleas'd to call to mind a late affront, which, in your heat of passion, you gave a Gentleman.

*Ol.* What, such a one as thou art, was he?

*Vin.* True, noble Sir. Who could no less in Honour than direct me, his chosen Friend, unto you, with the length of his Sword, or to take the length of yours. The place, if you please, the Ground whereon you parted, the hour, seven the next morning: Or, if you like not these, in part, or all, to make your own appointments.

*Ol.* The bravest Method in *Beggars*, that ever was discovered! I would be upon the bones of this Rogue now, but for crossing my other design, which fires me. I must therefore be rid of him on any terms. Let his own Appointments stand. Tell him I'll meet him.

*Vin.* You shall most nobly engage his life to serve you, Sir.

*Ol.* You'll be his Second, will you?

*Vin.* To do you further service, Sir, I have undertaken it.

*Ol.* I'll send a Beadle shall undertake you both.

*Vin.* Your Mirth becomes the bravery of your mind and dauntless Spirit. So takes his leave your Servant, Sir.

*Ol.* I think, as my Friend said, the Court goes a Begging indeed. But I must not lose my Beggar wenches.

*Enter Rachel and Meric!*

*Ol.* Oh here they come. They are delicately skinn'd and limb'd. There, there, I saw above the ham as the wind blew. Now they spie me.

*Ra.* Sir, Ebeseech you look upon us with the favour of a Gentleman. We are in a present distress, and utterly unacquainted in these parts; and therefore forc'd by the Calamity of our misfortune, to implore the Courtesse, or rather Charity, of those to whom we are strangers.

*Ol.* Very fine, this!

*Mer.* Be therefore pleas'd, right Noble Sir, not only valuing us by our outward Habits, which cannot but appear loathsome or despicable unto you, but as we are forlorn Christians; and, in that estimation, be compassionately mov'd to cast a handful or two of your Silver, or a few of your Golden Pieces unto us, to furnish us with Linnen, and some decent Habilliments.

*Ol.* They beg as high as the Man-beggar I met withal, sure the Beggars are all mad to day, or bewiched into a Language they understand not. The Spirits of some decay'd Gentry talk in 'em sure.

*Ra.* May we expect a gracious Answer from you, Sir?

*Mer.* And that as you can with our Virgin Prayers to be propitious for you.

*Ra.* That you never be deny'd a Suit by any Mistress.

*Mer.* Nay, that the fairest may be ambitious to place their favours on you.

*Ra.* That your Virue and Valour may lead you to the most honourable Actions; and that the Love of all exquisite Ladies may arm you.

*Alas!*



*Mer.* And that, when you please to take a Wife may Honour, Beauty, and Wealth, contend to endow her most with.

*Ra.* And that with her you have a long and prosperous Life.

*Mer.* A fair and fortunate Posterity.

*Ol.* This exceeds all that ever I heard, and strikes me into wonder. Pray tell me how long have you been Beggars; or how chanc'd you to be so.

*Ra.* By influence of our Stars, Sir.

*Mer.* We were born to no better Fortune.

*Ol.* How came you to talk thus, and so much above the Beggars Dialect?

*Ra.* Our Speech came naturally to us, and we ever lov'd to learn by wrote as well as we could.

*Mer.* And to be ambitious above the vulgar, to ask more than common Alms, what ere Men please to give us.

*Ol.* Sure some well disposed Gentleman, as my self, got these Wenches. They are too well grown to be mine own, and I cannot be incestuous with 'em.

*Ra.* Pray Sir your noble bounty.

*Ol.* What a tempting Lip that little Rogue moves there! and what an enticing Eye the tother. I know not which to begin with. What's this a Flea upon thy bosome?

*Mer.* Is it not a Straw colour'd one Sir?

*Ol.* O what a provoking Skin is there! that very touch inflames me.

*Ra.* Sir, are you mov'd in Charity towards us yet?

*Ol.* Mov'd? I am mov'd. No flesh and blood more mov'd.

*Mer.* Then pray Sir your Benevolence.

*Ol.* Benevolence? which shall I be Benevolent to; or which first? I am pussell'd in the choyce. Would some sworn Brother of mine were here to draw a Cut with me.

*Ra.* Sir, Noble Sir.

*Ol.* First let me tell you, *Dam'st*, I am bound by a strong vow to kiss all the Woman Sex I meet this morning.

*Mer.* Beggars and all Sir!

*Ol.* All, all. Let not your coyneis cross a Gentleman's vow, I beseech you. *Kiss.*

*Ra.* You will tell now.

*Ol.* Tell quoth a! I could tell a thousand on those Lips---and as many upon those. What life-restoring breaths they have: Milk from the Cow steams not so sweetly. I must lay one of 'em aboard; both if my tackling hold.

*Ra.* *Mer.* Sir, Sir.

*Ol.* But how to bargain, now, will be the doubt. They that beg so high as by the handfulls, may expect for price above the rate of good Mens Wives.

*Ra.* Now, will you, Sir, be pleas'd?

*Ol.* With all my heart, Sweetheart. And I am glad thou knowest my mind. Here is twelve-pence a piece for you.

*Ra.* *Me.* We thank you, Sir.

*Ol.* That's but in earnest. I'll jest away the rest with yee Look here---  
 All this. Come, you know my meaning. Dost thou look about thee,  
 Sweet little One? I like thy Care. There's no body coming. But we'll  
 get behind these Bushes. I know you keep each others Counsels---Must  
 you be drawn to't? Then I'll pull. Come away---

*Ra. Me.* Ah ah---

*Enter Springlove, Vincent, Hilliard.*

*Vin.* Let's beat his brains out.

*Ol.* Come leave your squealing.

*Ra.* O you hurt my hand.

*Hil.* Or cut the Leasher's Throat.

*Spr.* Would you be hang'd? Stand back. Let me alone.

*Mer.* You shall not pull us so.

*Spr.* O do not hurt 'em, Master.

*Ol.* Hurt 'em? I meant 'em but too well. Shall I be so prevented.

*Spr.* They be but young and simple. And if they have offended, let  
 not your Worship's own hands drag 'em to the Law, or carry 'em to  
 Punishment. Correct 'em not your self. It is the Beadle's Office.

*Ol.* Do you talk shag-rag: Heart yond's more of 'em. I shall be beggar-  
 pawld if I stay. Thou say'st right, honest fellow, there's a Tester for  
 thee.

*Exit running.*

*Vin.* He is prevented, and ashamed of his purpose.

*Spr.* Nor were we to take notice of his purpose more than to prevent it.

*Hil.* True, politick Springlove, 'twas better his own fear quit us of him,  
 than our force.

*Ra.* Look you here, Gentlemen, twelve pence a piece.

*Mer.* Besides fair offers and large promises. What ha' you got to day,  
 Gentlemen?

*Vin.* More then (as we are Gentlemen) we would have taken.

*Hil.* Yet we put it up in your Service.

*Ra. Mer.* Ha ha ha. Switches and kicks. Ha ha ha---

*Spr.* Talk not here of your Gettings. We must quit this Quarter. The  
 eager Gentlemans repulse may arm him and return him with revenge upon  
 us. We must therefore leap Hedge and Ditch now; through the Bryers  
 and Myres, till we scape out of this Liberty, to our next Rendezvous; where  
 we shall meet the Crew, and then bay tossé and laugh all Night.

*Mer.* As we did last Night.

*Ra.* Hold out, Meriel.

*Mer.* Lead on, brave Generak

*to Spr.*

*Vin.* What shall we do? They are in heart still. Shall we go on?

*Hil.* There's no flinching back, you see.

*Spr.* Besides, if you beg no better than you begin, in this lousy Fashion,  
 you cannot scape the Jayle; or the Whip, long.

*Vin.* To tell you true, 'tis not the least of my purpose, to work means  
 for our discovery, to be releas'd out of our Trade.

*Enter Martin and Amie in poor habits.*

*Spr.* Stay here come more Passengers. Single your selves agen, and fall  
 to your Calling discreetly.

*Hil.* I'll single no more. If you'll beg in full cry I am for you.

*Mar.* I that will be fine; let's charm all together.

*Spr.* Stay first and list a little.

*Mar.* Be of good cheer, Sweetheart, we have escap'd hitherto: And I believe that all the Search is now retir'd, and we may safely pass forwards.

*Am.* I should be safe with thee. But that's a most lying Proverb, that says, Where Love is, there is no Lack. I am faint, and cannot Travel further without Meat; and if you lov'd me, you would get me some.

*Mar.* We'll venture at the next Village to call for some. The best is, we want no Money.

*Am.* We shall be taken then, I fear. I'll rather pine to death.

*Mar.* Be not so fearful. Who can know us in these Clownish Habits?

*Am.* Our Cloaths, indeed, are poor enough to beg with. Would I cou'd beg, so it were of Strangers that could not know me, rather than buy of those that would betray us.

*Mar.* And yonder be some that can teach us.

*Spr.* These are the young couple of Run-away Lovers disguiz'd, that the Country is so laid for. Observe and follow now. Now the Lord to come with ye, good loving Master and Maystres, your blessed Charity to the Poor, Lame and Sick; weak and comfortless, that will Night and Day—

*All.* Duty and truly Pray for you. Duty and truly pray for you.

*Spr.* Pray hold your peace, and let me alone. Good young Master and Mistris, a little Comfort amongst us all, and to bless you where e're you go, and

*All.* Duty and truly pray for you. Duty and truly—

*Spr.* Pray do not ule me thus. Now sweet young Master and Mistris, to look upon your Poor, that have no relief or succour, no bread to put in our heads.

*Vin.* Wouldst thou put Bread in thy Brains?

*All together.*

*No Lands or Living.*

*Spr.* No House nor home; nor covering from the Cold; no health, no help but your sweet Charity.

*Mer.* No Bands or Shirts but louse on our backs:

*Hil.* No Smocks or Petticoats to hide our Scratches:

*Ra.* No Shoes to our Legs, or Hose to our Feet.

*Vin.* No Skin to our Flesh, nor Flesh to our Bones shortly:

*Hil.* If we follow the Devil that taught us to beg:

*All.* Duty and truly pray for you.

*Spr.* I'll run away from you if you beg a stroak more. Good worshipful Master and Mistris.

*Mar.* Good Friend forbear. Here is no Master or Mistris. We are poor Folks. Thou seest no Worship upon our backs, I am sure. And for within, we want as much as you, and would as willingly beg, if we knew how as well.

*Spr.* Alack for pity. You may have enough. And what I have is yours, if you'll accept it. 'Tis wholesome Food from a good Gentleman's Gate—  
*Alas good Mistris—Much good do your heart. How favourly she feeds.*

*Mar.* What do you mean to poison your self?

*Am.* Do you shew Love in grudging me?

*Mar.*

*Mar.* Nay, if you think it hurts you not, fall too. I'll not beguile you. And here, mine Host, something towards your Reckoning.

*Am.* This Beggar is an Angel sure!

*Spr.* Nothing by way of gentle bargain, gentle Master. 'Tis against Order, and will never thrive. But pray, Sir, your reward in Charity.

*Mar.* Here then in Charity. This fellow would never make a Clerk.

*Spr.* What! All this, Master?

*Am.* What is it? Let me see't.

*Spr.* 'Tis a whole silver Three-pence, Mistress.

*Am.* For shame, ingrateful Miser. Here Friend, a golden Crown for thee.

*Spr.* Bountifull Goodness! Gold? If I thought a dear year were coming, I would take a Farm now.

*Am.* I have rob'd thy Partners of their shares too. There's a Crown more for them.

*4. Duly and truly pray for you.*

*Mar.* What have you done? less would have serv'd. And your Bounty will betray us.

*Am.* Fie on your wretched policy.

*Spr.* No, no good Master: I knew you all this while, and my sweet Mistress too. And now I'll tell you. The Search is every way; the Countrey all laid for you. 'Tis well you staid here. Your Habits, were they but a little nearer our Fashion, would secure you with us. But are you married, Master and Mistress? Are you joyned in Matrimony? In Heart I know you are. And I will (if it please you) for your great Bounty, bring you to a Curate, that lacks no License, nor has any Living to lose, that shall put you together.

*Mar.* Thou art a heavenly Beggar!

*Spr.* But he is so scrupulous, and severely precise, that unless you, Mistress, will affirm that you are with Child by the Gentleman; or that you have, at least, cleft or slept together (as he calls it) he will not marry you. But if you have lyen together, then 'tis a Case of Necessity, and he holds himself bound to do it.

*Mar.* You may say you have.

*Am.* I would not have it so, nor make that Lye against my self for all the World.

*Spr.* That I like well, and her exceedingly.  
I'll do my best for you however.

*Aside.*

*Mar.* I'll do for thee, that--thou shalt never Beg more.

*Spr.* That cannot be purchas'd scarce for the price of your Mistress. Will you walk, Master?--We use no Complement.

*Am.* By inforc'd Matches Wards are not set free  
So oft, as sold into Captivity:

Which made me, fearless, fly from one I hate,  
Into the hazard of a harder Fate.



## A C T. IV. Scene I.

*Enter Talboy. Oliver. With riding Switches.*

*Tal.* **S**He's gone. *Anie* is gone. Ay me she's gone, and has me left of joy bereft, or make me moan. *O me, Anie.*

*Ol.* What the Devil ails the Fellow too? why? why? Master *Talboy*; my Cousin *Talboy* that should'st ha' been, art not a sham'd to cry at this growth? and for a thing that's better lost than found: a Wench?

*Tal.* Cry! who crys? do I cry; or look with a crying Countenance? I scorn it; and scorn to think on her, but in just anger.

*Ol.* So this is brave now, it 'twould hold.

*Tal.* Nay it shall hold. And so let her go, for a scurvy what d'ecall't; I know not what bad enough to call her. -- But something of mine goes with I am sure. She has cost me in Gloves, Ribbands, Scarfs, Rings, and such like things, more than I am able to speak of at this time. -- Oh.

*Ol.* Because thou canst not speak for crying. Fy Master *Talboy*, agen?

*Tal.* I scorn it agen, and any man that says I cry, or will cry agen. And let her go agen; and what she has of mine let her keep, and hang her self, and the Rogue that's with her. I have enough; and am Heir of a well-known Estate, and that she knows. -- And therefore that she should fright me, and run away with a wages-fellow, that is but a petty Clerk and a Serving-man. There's the vexation of it. -- Oh there's the grief and vexation of it. -- Oh. --

*Ol.* Now he will cry his eyes out! You Sir. This life have I had with you all our long journey; which now is at an end here. This is Master *Oldrent's* house, where perhaps we shall find old *Henry*, the Uncle of that Rogue *Martin*, that is run away with your Sweet-heart.

*Tal.* I 'tis too true, too true, too true. You need not put me in mind on't. Oh. -- Oh.

*Ol.* Hold your peace and mind me. Leave your bawling, for fear I give you correction. This is the House I say, where it is most likely we shall hear of your Mistress and her companion. Make up your face quickly. Here comes one of the Servants, I suppose.

*Enter Randal.*

Shame not your self for ever, and me for company. Come, be confident.

*Tal.* As confident as your self or any man. -- But my poor heart feels what lies here. Here. I here it is, O. --

*Ol.* Good morrow, Friend. This is Squire *Oldrent's* House, I take it.

*Ran.* Pray take it not, Sir, before it be to be let: It has been my Masters and his Ancestors in that Name, above these three hundred years, as our House Chronicle doth notify; and not yet to be let. But as a friend, or stranger, in Guest-wife, you are welcome to it, as all other Gentlemen are, far and near, to my good Master, as you will find anon when you see him.

*Ol.*

*Ol.* Thou speak'st wittily and honestly. But I prethee good Friend, let our Nags be set up: they are tyed up at the post. You belong to the Stable, do you not?

*Ran.* Not so much as the Stable belongs to me. Sir, I pass through many Offices of the House, Sir. I am the running Bayley of it.

*Ol.* We have rid hard, hoping to find the *Squire* at home at this early time in the morning.

*Ran.* You are deceiv'd in that, Sir. He has been out these four hours. He is no *Snail*, Sir. You do not know him, I perceive, since he has been new moulded. But I'll tell you, because you are Gentlemen.

*Ol.* Our Horses, good Friend.

*Ran.* My Master is an ancient Gentleman, and a great House keeper; and pray'd for by all the Poor in the Countrey. He keeps a Guest house for all *Beggars*, far and near, costs him a hundred a year; at least; and is as well belov'd among the Rich. But of late he fell into great Melancholly, upon what, I know not: for he had then more cause to be merry than he has now. Take that by the way.

*Ol.* But Good Friend, our Horses.

*Ran.* For he had two Daughters, that knew well to order a House, and gave entertainment to Gentlemen. They were his *House-Doves*: But now they are flown; and no man knows how, why, or whither.

*Tal.* My *Dove* is flown too. Oh---

*Ran.* Was she your Daughter, Sir? She was a young one then, by the Beard you wear.

*Tal.* What she was, she was, d'ee see. I scorn to think on her---But I do---Oh.

*Ol.* Pray hold your peace, or feign some mirth, if you can.

*Sing. Tal.* Let her go, let her go. *I care not if I have her, I have her or no.*  
Ha ha ha--- Oh my heart will break---Oh---

*Ol.* Pray think of our Horses, Sir.

*Ran.* This is right my Master. When he had his Daughters he was sad; and now they are gone, he is the merriest man alive. Up at five a clock in the morning, and out till Dinner-time. Out agen at afternoon, and so till Supper-time. Skife out this away, and skife out that away. (He's no *Snail* I assure you.) And *Tantivy* all the Country over; where Hunting, Hawking, or any sport is to be made, or good Fellowship to be had; and so merry upon all occasions, that you would even bless your self if it were possible.

*Ol.* Our Horses, I prether.

*Ran.* And we, his Servants, live as merrily under him; and do all thrive. I my self was but a silly Lad when I came first, a poor turn-spit Boy. Gentlemen kept no whirling Jaks then, to cozen poor People of Mear. And I have now, without boast, 40 £. in my Purse, and am the youngest of half a score in the House, none younger than my self but one; and he is the Steward over all; his name is Master *Springel ve* (bless him where e're he is) he has a world of means: And we, the Underlings, get well the better by him; besides the Rewards many Gentlemen give us, that fare well, and lodge here sometimes.

*Ol.* O! we shall not forget you, Friend, if you remember our Horses, before they take harm.

*Ran.* No hurt, I warrant you: there's a Lad walking them.

*Ol.* Is not your Master coming, think you?

*Ran.* He will not be long a coming. He's no *Snail*, as I told you.

*Ol.* You told me so, indeed.

*Ran.* But of all the Gentlemen, that toss up the Ball, yea and the Sack too, commend me to old Master *Hearty*, a decay'd Gentleman; lives most upon his own Mirth, and my Masters Means, and much good may do him with it: He is the finest Companion of all. He does so hold my Master up with Stories, and Songs, and Catches, and t'other Cup of Sack, and such Tricks and Jiggs, you would admire—He is with him now.

*Ol.* That *Hearty* is *Martin's* Uncle. I am glad he is here. Bear up *Talbot*. Now, Friend pray let me ask you a question—Prethee stay.

*Ran.* Nay, marry I dare not. Your Yawdes may take cold, and never be good after it—*Exit.*

*Ol.* I thought I should never have been rid of him. But no sooner desir'd to stay, but he is gone. A pretty humour! *Enter Randal.*

*Ran.* Gentlemen, my Master will be here ere now, doubt not: for he is no *Snail*, as I told you. *Exit.*

*Ol.* No *Snail's* a great word with him. Prethee *Talbot* bear up. *Enter Usher.* Here comes another gray fellow.

*Ush.* Do you stand in the Porch, Gentlemen! the House is open to you. Pray enter the Hall. I am the Usher of it.

*Ol.* In good time, Sir. We shall be bold here, then, to attend your Masters coming.

*Ush.* And he's upon coming; and when he comes, he comes apace. He is no *Snail*, I assure you.

*Ol.* I was told so before, Sir. No *Snail*? sure 'tis the word of the house, and as ancient as the Family.

*Ush.* This Gentleman looks sadly, methinks.

*Tal.* Who I? not I. Pray pardon my looks for that. But my heart feels what's what. Ay me—

*Ush.* Pray walk to the Buttery, Gentlemen. My Office leads you thither.

*Ol.* Thanks, good Master Usher.

*Ush.* I have been Usher these twenty years, Sir. And have got well by my place, for using Strangers respectfully.

*Ol.* He has given the Hint too.

*Ush.* Something has come in by the by, besides standing wages, which is ever duly paid (thank a good Master, and an honest Steward) Heaven bless 'em. We all thrive under 'em.

*Enter Butler with Glasses and a Napkin.*

O here comes the Butler.

*But.* You are welcome, Gentlemen. Please ye draw nearer my Office, and take a morning Drink in a Cup of Sack, if it please you.

*Ol.* In what please you, Sir. We cannot deny the courtesie of the House, in the Master's absence.

*But.* He'll come apace when he comes. He's no *Snayle*, Sir. *Going.*

*Cl.* Still 'tis the house-word. And all the Servants wear Livery Beards.

*But.* Or perhaps you had rather drink Whitewine and Sugar. Please your selves, Gentlemen; here you may taste all Liquors. No Gentleman's House in all this Countrey, or the next, so well stor'd (--- make us thankful for it.) And my Master for his Hospitality to Gentlemen, his Charity to the Poor, and his bounty to his Servants, has not his Peer in the Kingdom (make us thankful for it) And 'tis as fortunate a House for Servants, as ever was built upon *Fairy Ground*. I my self, that have serv'd here, Man and Boy, these four and forty years, have gotten together (besides something more then I will speak of, distributed among my poor Kindred) by my Wages, my Vails at *Christmasts*, and otherwise, together with my Rewards of kind Gentlemen, that have found courteous Entertainment here---

*Ol.* There he is too.

*But.* Have, I say, gotten together (tho' in a dangerous time I speak it) a brace of hundred pounds---Make me thankful for it. And for losses I have had none. I have been Butler these two and thirty years, and never lost the value of a silver Spoon, nor ever broke a Glass---Make me thankful for it. White Wine and Sugar, say you Sir?

*Ol.* Please your self, Sir.

*But.* This Gentleman speaks not. Or had you rather take a Drink of brown Ale with a Toast, or March Beer with Sugar and Nutmeg: or had you rather drink without Sugar?

*Ol.* Good Sir, a Cup of your Household-Beer.

*Exit But.*

I fear he will draw down to that at last.

*Enter Butler with a Silver Can of Sack.*

*But.* Here Gentlemen, is a Cup of my Masters small Beer: But it is good old *Canary*, I assure you. And here's to your welcome.

*Enter Cook.*

*Cook.* And welcome the Cook says, Gentlemen. Brother Butler, lay a Napkin, I'll fetch a Cut of the *Surlown* to strengthen your patience till my Master comes, who will not now be long, for he's no *Snayle*, Gentlemen.

*Ol.* I have often heard so. And here's to you, Master Cook--  
*Prithee* speak, Master *Talboy*, or force one Laugh more, if thou canst.

*Cook.* Sir, the Cook drinks to you.

*To Tal.*

*Tal.* Ha ha ha---

*Ol.* Well said.

*Tal.* He is in the same Livery-Beard too.

*Coo.* But he is the oldest Cook, and of the ancientest House, and the best for House-keeping, in this County, or the next. And tho' the Master of it write but *Squire*, I know no Lord like him.

*Enter Chaplain.*

And now he's come. Here comes the *Word* before him. The *Parson* has ever the best Stomach. I'll Dish away presently.

*Exit.*

*But.* Is our Master come, Sir *Domine*?

*Chap.* Est ad *Mancm*. Non est ille: et *studo*.

*Ol.* He has the *Word* too in *Latine*. Now bear up *Talboy*.

*Chap.*



*Chap.* Give me a Preparative of Sack. It is a gentle Preparative before Mear, And so a gentle touch of it to you Gentlemen.

*Ol.* It is a gentle Offer, Sir; and as gently to be taken.

*Enter Oldrents and Hearty.*

*Old.* About with it, my Lads. And this is as it should be--- Not till my turn, Sir, I. Though I confess, I have had but three Morning-draughts to day.

*Ol.* Yet it appears you were abroad betimes, Sir.

*Old.* I am no Snayle, Sir.

*Ol.* So your men told us, Sir.

*Old.* But where be my Catchers? Come a Round. \* And so let us drink.

*The Catch sung. And they drink about. The Singers are all Graybeards.*

**A** Round, a Round, a Round, Boyes, a Round.  
Let Mirib fly aloft, and Sorrow be drown'd.

*Old Sack and Old Songs, and a merry old Crew,  
Can charm away Cares when the Ground looks blew.*

*Old.* Well said old Hearty. And, Gentlemen, welcome.

*Tal.* Ah---

*He sighs.*

*Old.* Oh mine Ears! What was that a sigh: And in my House? Look: has it not split my Walls? if not, make vent for it: Let it out: I shall be stifled else.

*Exit Chap.*

*Ol.* He hopes your Pardon, Sir: his Cause consider'd.

*Old.* Cause! Can there be a cause for sighing?

*Ol.* He has lost his Mistress, Sir.

*Old.* Ha ha ha. Is that a Cause? Do you hear me complain the loss of my two Daughters?

*Ol.* They are not lost I hope, sir,

*Old.* No more can be his Mistress. No Woman can be lost. They may be mis-laid a little: but found again, I warrant you.

*Tal.* Ah----

*sighs.*

*Old.* Ods my life! He sighs again: And means to blow me out of my House. To Horse again. Here's no dwelling for me. Or stay: I'll cure him, if I can. Give him more Sack, to drown his Suspirations.

*While Oldrents and Talboy drink, Oliver takes Hearty aside.*

*Ol.* Sir, I am chiefly to inform you of the Disaster.

*Hea.* May it concern me?

*Ol.* Your Nephew Martin has stoln my Father's Ward, that Gentlemans *Bride* that should have been.

*Hea.* Indeed, Sir.

*Ol.* 'Tis most true---

*He gives Hearty a Letter.*

*Hea.* Another Glas of Sack. This Gentleman brings good News.

*Ol.* Sir, if you can prevent his danger---

*Hea.* Hang all Preventions. Let 'em have their Destiny.

*Tal.* Sir, I should have had her, 'tis true---

*To Oldrents.*

But she is gone, d'ee see? And let her go.

*Old.* Well said. He mends now.

*Tal.* I am glad I am rid of her (d'ee see) before I had more to do with her---

*Hea.* He mends apace.

*Hearty reads the Letter.*

*Tal.* For should I have married her before she had run away, d'ee see: And that she had run away (d'ee see) after she had been married to me (d'ee see) Then I had been a married Man without a Wife (d'ee see) Where now she being run away before I am married (d'ee see) I am no more married to her, (d'ee see) than she to me, (d'ee see.) And so long as I am none of hers (d'ee see) nor she none of mine (d'ee see) I ought to care as little for her, now she is run away (d'ee see) as if she had stay'd with me, (d'ee see.)

*Old.* Why this is excellent! Come hither *Hearty*.

*Tal.* I perceive it now; and the reason of it; And how, by Consequence (d'ee see) I ought not to look any further after. *Cries.* But that she should respect a poor base fellow, a Clerk at the most, and a Serving-man at best, before me, that am a Rich man, at the worst; and a Gentleman, at least, makes me--- I know not what to say---

*Old.* Worse than ever 'twas? Now he cries out-right.

*Tal.* I know not what to say---What to say---Oh

*Hea.* Then I do, Sir. The poor base fellow, that you speak of, is my Nephew: As good a Gentleman as your self. I understand the business by your Friend here.

*Tal.* I cry you mercy, Sir.

*Old.* You shall cry no Mercy, nor any thing else here, Sir; nor for any thing here, Sir. This is no place to cry in: Nor for any business. You, Sir, that come on business---

*To Old.*

*Ol.* It shall be none, Sir.

*Old.* My House is for no business, but the Belly business. You find not me so uncivil, Sir, as to Ask you from whence you came; who you are; or what's your business. I Ask you no question: And can you be so discourteous, as to tell me, or my Friend, any thing like business. If you come to be merry with me, you are welcome. If you have any business forget it: You forget where you are else. And so to Dinner.

*Hea.* Sir, I pray let me only prevail with you but to Read this.

*Old.* Spoil my Stomack now, and I'll not Eat this Fornight.

*He Reads aside.*

*Hea.* While he reads let me tell you, Sir. That my Nephew *Martin* has stoln that Gentleman's Mistress, it seems, is true. But I protest, as I am a Gentleman, I know nothing of the matter; nor where he or she is. But, as I am the forslaid Gentleman, I am glad on't with all my heart. *Hea.* my Boy *Mat.* Thou shalt restore our House.

*Ol.* Let him not hear, to grieve him, Sir.

*Hea.* Grieve him? What should he do with her; teach their Children to cry?

*Tal.* But I do hear you though; and I scorn to cry, as much as you, d'ee see, or your Nephew either, d'ee see.

*Hea.* Now thou art a brave fellow. So, so, hold up thy head, and thou shalt have a Wife, and a fine Thing.

*Tal.* Hang a Wife; and Pax o' your fine Thing (d'ee see) I scorn your Fopperies, d'ee see.

*Old.*

*Old.* And I do hear thee my Boy ; and rejoyce in thy Conversion. If thou canst but hold' now.

*Tal.* Yes, I can hold, Sir. And I hold well with your Sack, I could live and die with it, as I am true *Talboy*.

*Old.* Now thou art a tall fellow ; and shalt want no Sack.

*Tal.* And, Sir, I do honour you (d'ee see) and should wish my self one of your Household Servants (d'ee see) if I had but a gray Beard, d'ee see ?  
*Hay*, as Old Master *Clack* says

*Old.* Well, I have read the business here.

*Ol.* Call it not business, I beseech you, Sir.  
We desie all business.

*Tal.* I marry do we, Sir, D'ee see, Sir ? And a *Hay*, as Old Master *Clack* says.

*Old.* Grammercy Sack. Well, I have read the Matter here written by Master *Clack*. And do but bear up in thy humour, I will wait upon thee home.

*Knock within.*

Heark ! they knock to the Dresser. I have heard much of this old od-cited Justice *Clack* : And now I long to see him. 'Tis but crossing the Countrey two Days and a Nights Journey. We'll but dine and away presently. Bear up, I say, Master *Talboy*.

*Tal.* I will bear up, I warrant you, d'ee see, Sir---But here's a grudging still-----

*Exeunt.*

#### Scena Secunda.

*A great Noise within of rude Musick, Laughing, Singing, &c.*

*Enter Amie, Rachel, Meriel.*

*Am.* **H**ere's a Wedding with a witness, and a Holy-day with a hoigh. Let us out of the Noise, as we love our Ears :

*Ra.* Yes : and here we may pursue our own Discourse, and hear one another.

*Mer.* Concerning *Springlove* and your self, Mistress *Amie*.

*Am.* Well, Ladies, my confidence in you, that you are the same that you have protested your selves to be, hath so far won upon me, that I confess my self well-affected both to the Mind and Person of that *Springlove*. And, if he be (as fairly you pretend) a Gentleman, I shall easily dispence with Fortune.

*Ra.* *Mr.* He is, upon our Honours.

*Am.* How well that high Engagement suits your Habits.

*Ra.* Our Minds and Blood are still the same.

*Am.* I have past no Affiance to the other,  
That stole me from my Guardian. and the Match  
He would have forc'd me to : From which I would  
Have fled with any, or without a Guide.  
Besides, his Mind, more Clownish than his Habit,  
Deprav'd by Covetousness and Cowardise,  
Forc'd me into a way of Misery,  
To teke Relief from Beggars.

*Mer.* From poor *Us*.

*Am.* And then, to offer to marry me under a He 'ge, as the old Couple were to day, without Book or Ring, by the Chaplain of the *Beggars* Regiment, your *Patricio*, only to save Charges.

*Ra.* I have not seen the Wretch these three hours, whither is he gone?

*Am.* He told me to fetch Horse and fit Rayment for us; and so to post me hence: But I think it was to leave me on your hands.

*Mer.* He has taken some great distaste sure: For he is damnable jealous.

*Ra.* I, didst thou mark what a wild look he cast, when *Springlove* tumbled her, and kist her on the Straw this morning, while the *Mulick* play'd to the old Wedding-Folks?

*Mer.* Yes, and then *Springlove*, to make him madder, told him, that he would be his *Proxy*, and marry her for him, and lye with her the first night, with a naked Cudgel betwixt 'em, and make him a King of *Beggars*.

*Am.* I saw how it anger'd him. And I imagin'd then, and before, that there was more in *Springlove*, than downright *Beggar*. But tho' he be never so good a Gentleman, he shall observe fit time and distance till we are married.

*Ra.* Matrimony forbid else. (She's taken) But while we talk of a Match towards, we are mist within in the *Bride-Barn* among the *Revel rout*.

*Am.* We have had all the sport they can make us, in the past passages.

*Mer.* How cautious the old contracted Couple were for Portion and Jointure!

*Ra.* What *Peoffees*, she being an Heir of fourscore, (and seven years stone-blind) had, in trust for her Estate.

*Am.* And how carefully he secur'd all to himself, in case he out-liv'd her, being but seven years older than she. And what pains the Lawyer of the Rout here, took about it.

*Ra.* And then, how solemnly they were joyn'd, and admonish'd, by our *Parson Under hedge*, to live together in the fear of the Lash, and give good example to the younger Reprobates, to beg within compass, to escape the jaws of the Justice, the Clutch of the Constable, the Hooks of the Headborough, and the biting blows of the Beadle. And, in so doing, they should defie the Devil and all his Works, and after their painful Pilgrimage in this life, they should die in the Ditch of Delight.

*Mer.* O but *Scribble's Epithalamium*.

TO the blind Virgin of fourscore,  
And the lame Batchelor, of more,  
How Cupid gave her Eyes to see,  
And Vulcan lent him Legs:  
How Venus caus'd their Sport to be  
Prepar'd with butter'd Eggs.  
Yet when she shall be seven years wed,  
She shall be bold to say,  
She has as much by Maidenhead,  
As on her Wedding day.

*Ra.* So may some Wives that were married at sixteen to Lads of one and twenty.

*Am.*



*Am.* But at the Wedding-Feast, when the Bride bridled it, and her Groom saddled it. There was the sport, in her Mumping, and his Champing; the Crew scrambling, and our selves trembling; then the confusion of Noises, in talking, laughing, scolding, singing, howling; with their Actions, of snatching, scratching, towing and lousing themselves, and one another---

*Enter Springlove, Vincent, and Hilliard.*

But who comes here?

*Spr.* O, Ladies, you have lost as much Mirth as would have fill'd up a week of Holy-days.

*Springlove takes Amie aside, and courts her in a gentle way.*

*Vin.* I am come about again for the Beggars life now.

*Ra.* You are. I am glad on't.

*Hil.* There is no life but it.

*Vin.* With them there is no Grievance or Perplexity;  
No fear of war, or State Disturbances.  
No Alteration in a Common-wealth,  
Or Innovation, shakes a Thought of theirs.

*Mer.* Of ours you should say.

*Hil.* Of ours, he means.

We have no fear of lessening our Estates;  
Nor any grudge with us (without Taxation)  
To lend or give, upon command, the whole  
Strength of our Wealth for publick Benefit:  
While some that are held rich in their Abundance,  
(Which is their Misery, indeed) will see  
Rather a general Ruin upon all,  
Then give a scruple to prevent the Fall.

*Vin.* 'Tis only we that live.

*Ra.* I'm glad you are so taken with your Calling.

*Mer.* We are no less, I assure you. We find the Sweetness of it now.

*Ra.* The Mirth, the Pleasures, the Delights. No Ladies live such Lives.

*Mer.* Some few, upon necessity, perhaps. [But that's not worth grammarcy.

*Vin.* They will never be weary.

*Hil.* Whether we seem to like, or dislike, all's one to them.

*Vin.* We must do something to be taken by, and discovered, we shall never be our selves, and get home again else.

*Springlove and Amie come to the rest.*

*Spr.* I am yours for ever. Well Ladies, you have mist rare sport; but now the Bride has mist you with her half-half eye; and the Bridegroom, with the help of his Crutches, is drawing her forth for a Dance, here, in the opener air. The House is now too hot for 'em. O, here come the chief Revellers. The Souldier, the Courtier, the Lawyer, and the Poet, who is Master of their Revels, before the old Couple in State. Attend, and hear him speak, as their Inductor.

## Poet.

**H**ere on this Green, like King and Queen  
 ( For a short truce ) we do produce  
 Our old new-married Pair.  
 Of Dish and Wallet, and of Straw-Pallet  
 With Rags to show, from top to toe,  
 She is the ancient Heire.

He is the Lord of Bottle-gourd,  
 Of Sachell great, for Bread and Meat,  
 And, for small Pence, a Purse.  
 To all that give, Long may you Live  
 He loudly Cries: But who denies  
 Is sure to have his Curse.

*Vin.* Well said Field-Poet. Phœbus, we see, inspires  
 As well the Beggar, as the Poet Laureat.

*Spr.* And shines as warm under a Hedge-bottom, as on the tops of Palaces.  
*Po.* I have not done yet. Now this is to incite you to dance.

**P**repare your selves, like Faery Elves,  
 Now in a Dance to show,  
 That you approve, the God of Love  
 Has many Shafts to's Bow:

With Golden-head, and some of Lead,  
 But that which made these feel,  
 By subtile craft was sure a Shaft  
 That headed was with Steel.

For they were Old; no Earth more cold;  
 Their Hearts were Flints intire;  
 Whence the Steels stroak did sparks provoke,  
 That set their Bloods on fire.

Now strike up Piper; and each man here  
 Be blith, and take his Mistriss by the Goll.

*Hi.* That's no Rhime, Poet.

*Po.* There's as good Poetry in blank Verse, as Meetre.

*Song.*

## Song.

**T**Here was a jovial Beggar  
 And had a wooden Legg,  
 He was lame from his Cradle  
 And forced for to beg,  
*And a begging we will go will go will go*  
*And a begging I will go.*

A bag for my Oatmeal  
 Another for my Rye,  
 A little bottle by my side  
 To drink when I am a dry,  
*And a begging, &c.*

A Bag for my Wheat  
 And another for my Salt,  
 A little pair of Crutches  
 To see how I can halt,  
*And a begging, &c.*

A Bag for my Bread  
 Another for my Cheese,  
 A little Dog to follow me  
 To gather what I leese,  
*And a begging, &c.*

To Pimlico wee'l go  
 VVhere merry we shall be  
 And ev'ry man with a Can in's hand  
 And a VVench upon his knee,  
*And a &c.*

And when that we're disposed  
 VVe tumble on the grass  
 VVith long patch'd Coates  
 For to hide a pretty Lafs,  
*And a begging we will go will go will go*  
*And a begging we will go.*

Seaven years I serv'd  
 My old Master *Wild*,  
 Seaven years I begged  
 Whilst I was but a Child,  
*And a begging we will go will go will go*  
*And a begging we will go.*

I had the pretty knack  
 For to wheedle and to cry,  
 By young and by Old  
 Much pittied e're was I,  
*And a begging, &c.*

Fatherless and Motherless  
 Still was my Complaint  
 And none that ever saw me  
 But took me for a Saint,  
*And a begging, &c.*

I begg'd for my Master  
 And got him store of Pelf,  
 But *Jove* now be praised  
 I do beg for my self,  
*And &c.*

Within a hollow Tree  
 I live and pay no Rent,  
 Providence provides for me  
 And I am well content  
*And, &c.*

I fear no Plots against me  
 But live in open Cell  
 Why who would be a King  
 When a Beggar lives so well,  
*And a begging we will go will go will go,*  
*And a begging we will go.*

*Spr.* Come, hay! the Daunce, the Daunce: Nay we'll ha' the *Old Couple* in, as Blind and Lame as they are.

*Bri.* What will you fo?

*Musick. Dance.*

*Spr.* Well hobbled *Bridgroom*!

*Vin.* Well grop'd *Bride*!

*Hil.* Hay lusty. *Hay Holy day.*

*Spr.* Set h'em down; let 'em down: They ha' done well.

*Gro.* A ha! I am lustier than I was Thirty Years ago.

*Bri.* And I, than I was Threescore past. A hem, a hemh.

*Vin.* What a Night here's towards!

*Hil.* Sure they will kill one another.

*Po.* Each with a fear the tother will live longest.

*Spr.* *Poet* thou hast spoken learnedly, and acted bravely: Thou art both *Poet* and *Actor*.

*Po.* So has been many famous men. And if here were no worse, we might have a *Musique*, or a *Comedie* presented to Night, in honour of the *Old Couple*.

*Vin.* Let us each man try his ability  
Upon some Subject now *Extempore*.

*Spr.* Agreed. Give us a Theme; and try our Action.

*Po.* I have already thought upon't. I want but *Actors*.

*Hil.* What persons want you? what would you present?

*Po.* I would present a *Commonwealth*; *Utopia*,  
With all her Branches and Consistencies.

*Ra.* I'll be *Utopia*; who must be my Branches?

*Po.* The *Country*, the *City*, the *Court*, and the *Camp*.

*Epitomiz'd* and Personated by a *Gentleman*, a *Merchant*, a *Courtier*, and a *Souldier*.

*Soul.* I'll be your *Souldier*. Am not I one? ha!

*Cou.* And am not I a fashionable *Courtier*?

*Po.* But who the *Citizen* or *Merchant*?

*Spr. I.* *Vin.* And I your *Country Gentleman*.

*Hil.* Or I.

*Po.* Yet to our *Moral* I must add two Persons, *Divinity* and *Law*.

*Law.* Why la you now. And am not I a *Lawyer*?

*Po.* But where's *Divinity*?

*Vin.* Marry that I know not. One of us might do that, if either knew how to handle it.

*Spr.* Where's the old *Patrio*, our Priest, my Ghostly Gather? He'll do it rarely.

*i. Beg.* He was telling Fortunes ene now to Countrey Wenches. I'll fetch him---- *Exit.*

*Spr.* That *Patrio* I wonder at: He has told me strange things in Clouds.

*Am.* And me somewhat that I may tell you hereafter.

*Spr.* That you shall be my *Bride*?

*Am.* I will not tell you now.

*Vin.* Well: but what must our Speeches tend to? what must we do one with another?



*Pa.* I would have the *Country*, the *City*, and the *Court*, be at great variance for *Superiority*. Then would I have *Divinity* and *Law* stretch their wide Throats to appease and reconcile them : Then would I have the *Souldier* cudgel them all together, and overtop them all. Stay, yet I want another Person.

*Hil.* What must he be ?

*Pa.* A Beggar.

*Vin.* Here's enough of us, I think. What must the Beggar do ?

*Pa.* He must at last, overcome the *Souldier* ; and bring them all to *Beggars-Hall*. And this, well acted, will be for the honour of our Calling.

*All.* A Scribble ! A Scribble !

*Hil.* Come where's this *Patrico*, that we may begin ?

*Enter Patrico.*

*Pa.* Alack and welladay, this is no time to play. Our Quarter is beset. We are all in the Net. Leave off your merry Glee.

*Vin.* You begin scurvily.

*Spr.* Why what's the Matter ?

*Within.* Bing awast, bing awast. The *Quire Cove* and the *Hermanbeck*.

*Some Beggars run over the Stage.*

*Spr.* We are beset indeed. What shall we do ?

*Vin.* I hope we shall be taken.

*Hil.* If the good hour he come, welcome by the grace of good Fortune.

*Enter Sentwell, Constable, Watch. The Crew slip away.*

*Sent.* Beset the Quarter round. Be sure that none escape.

*Spr.* Lord to come with you, blessed Master, to a many distressed—

*Vin.* *Hil.* Duty and truly pray for you.

*Ra.* Mer. Good your good Worship, duty and truly, &c.

*Sen.* A many counterfeit Rogues ! So frolick and so lamentable all in a breath ? You were Acting a Play but now, we'll Act with you. Incorrigible Vagabonds.

*Spr.* Good Master, 'tis a *Holy-day* with us. An *Heire* was Married here to day.

*Sen.* Married ! Not so I hope. Where is she ? 'Tis for an *Heir* we seek.

*Spr.* Here she is Master—Hide your Selves in the Straw—the Straw Quickly into the Straw—

*Sen.* What tellsthou me of this ? An Old blind Beggar-Woman. We must find a young Gentlewoman-Heir among you. Where's all the rest of the Crew.

*Con.* Slip into the Barn and the Bushes by : but none can scape.

*Sen.* Look you to that, and to these here.

*Exit with Watch.*

*Spr.* Into the Straw I say.

*Vin.* No, good *Springlove*. The Ladies and We are agreed now to draw stakes, and play this lowlie Game no further.

*Hil.* We will be taken, and disclose our selves. You see we shall be forced to it else. The Cowardly Cleark has don't to save himself.

*Spr.* Do you fear no shame, Ladies?

*Re.* Dost think it a shame to leave Begging?

*Mer.* Or that our Father will turn us out to it again?

*Spr.* Nay, since you are so resolute, know, that I my self begin to find this is no courtes for *Gentlemen*. This *Lady* shall take me off it.

*Am.* Make but your Protestations good, and take me yours. And for the Gentleman that surprizes us, tho' he has all my Uncles trust, he shall do any thing for me to our advantage.

*Vin.* If, *Springlove* thou could'st post now to thy Tying-house, and fetch all our Cloaths, we might get off most neatly.

*Spr.* A Horse and six hours Travel would do that.

*Am.* You shall be furnisht, doubt not.

*Enter Sentwell. Watch.*

*Sent.* She's scap'd, or is invisible. You Sir, I take to be the chief *Rogue* of this Regiment. Let him be whipt till he brings forth the *Heir*.

*Con.* That is but till he stinks, Sir. Come, Sir, strip, strip.

*Am.* Unhand him, Sir. What *Heir* do you seek Master *Sentwell*?

*Sent.* Precious, how did my haste oversee her? O *Mistress Amie*! Could I, or your Uncle, Justice *Clack*, a wiser man than I, ever ha' thought to have found you in such company?

*Am.* Of me, Sir, and my company, I have a story to delight you: which on our March towards your House, I will relate to you.

*Sent.* And thither will I lead you as my Guest. But to the Law surrender all the rest.

I'll make your peace.

*Am.* We must fare all alike.

*Exeunt.*

## ACT. V.

*Clack. Martin.*

*Cl.* I Have forgiven you, provided that my Niece be safely taken; and so to be brought home. Safely I say, that is to say, unstain'd, unblemish'd, undishonour'd; that is to say, with no more faults, criminal, or accusative, than those she carried with her.

*Mar.* Sir, I believe—

*Cl.* Nay, if we both speak together, how shall we hear one another? you believe her Verrue is Armour of proof, without your Counsel, or your Guard; and therefore you left her in the hands of Rogues and Vagabonds, to make your own Peace with me. You have it. Provided, I say (as I said before) that she be safe, that is to say, uncorrupted, undefiled; that is to say—as I said before.

*Mar.* Mine intent, Sir, and my only way—

*Cl.*

*Cl.* Nay, if we both speak together, how shall we hear one another? as I said before. Your intent, and your only way, you would ha' said, was to run away with her; and that by her only Instigation, to avoid the eye of Marriage with Master Talbot; that is to say, to shun the Match that I had for her; that is to say, rather to disobey me, than to displease her self. Wherein (altho' she did not altogether transgress the Law) she did both offend and prejudice me, an Instrument; nay, I may say, a Pillar thereof. And you, in assisting her, furthering, and conveying her away, did not only infringe the Law, in an unlawful Departure from your Master, but in a higher point; that is to say, *Top, and Top-Gallies high*. I would ha' found a Jury should ha' found it so.

*Mar.* But Sir, an't please you.

*Cl.* Must we then both speak together? Have I not born with thee, to speak all thou pleasest in thy defence? Have I not broke mine own Rule, which is, to punish before I examine; and so to have the Law the surer o' my side? And dost thou still persist? Hold your own peace; or, as I am a Justice of the Kings, I will unsay what I said before, and set a *Curat Lex* at you, Sirrah, that shall course you up the heavy Hill. Oh, is your Tongue fallen into your Leg now? Do not you know I have acquitted you? Provided--As I said before. Go your way in, and see that the Gentlemen, who, I think, were got in Sack, christned in Sack, nursed with Sack, and fed up to gray hairs with only Sack; see, I say, that they want no Sack. My Son Oliver (I thank him) has brought me a pair of such Guests.

*Enter Sentwell.*

O Master Sentwell! Good News?

*Sen.* Of beggarly news, the best you have heard.

*Cl.* That is to say, you have found my Niece among the Beggars. That is to say--

*Sen.* True Sir Oliver, I found her---

*Cl.* Now if we both speak together, who shall hear one another?

*Sen.* I thought you desire was to be inform'd.

*Cl.* I can inform my self, Sir, by your looks. I have taken a hundred Examinations i' my days of Fellons, and other Offenders, out of their very Countenances; and wrought 'em down *verbatim*, to what they would have said. I am sure it has serv'd to hang some of 'em, and whip the rest.

*Sen.* Justice Clack still! He must talk all. His Clack must only go.

*Cl.* But to the point. You have found my Niece. You have left her at your own House; not only to shift her out of her Disguise, but out of her shame, to come nearer me, until I send her pardon.

*Sen.* Most true, Sir. But the Company she was in--

*Cl.* Again! Do not I know the Company? Beggars, Rogues, Vagabonds, and Hedge-birds.

*Sen.* But do you know whom, or how many we have taken? and how the rest escap'd?

*Cl.* A needless knowledge. Why should we take more than her self? Or how could you take those that could escape?

*Enter Martin.*

*Mar.* Sir, the Old Gentlemen within, sent me to wait upon you. Without you (they say) they need not my Service.

*Cl.*

*Cl.* Tell 'em then, I'll wait on 'em presently.

*Exit Martin.*

*Sen.* But, Sir, we have taken with her such *Beggars*, such *Rogues*, such *Vagabonds*, and such *Hedge-birds* (since you call 'em so) as you never knew, or heard of, though now the Countries swarm with 'em under every Hedge, as if an innumerable Army of 'em were lately disbanded without Pay. *Hedge-birds* said you? *Hedge Lady birds*, *Hedge Cavaliers*, *Hedge Souldier*, *Hedge Lawyer*, *Hedge Fiddlers*, *Hedge Poet*, *Hedge Players*, and a *Hedge Priest* among 'em. Such we have taken for the *Principals*. But to see how the Multitude leapt us, was more sport than pity. How, upon a watch-word given, they in the instant vanish'd by more several ways than there were legs among 'em; how the Cripples leapt over Pales and Hedges; how the Blind found their way thorow Lakes and Ditches; how a *Doxey* flew with two Children at her back, and two more, perhaps, in her belly--

*Cl.* A *Hedge Priest* have you taken, say you?

*Sen.* Yes, Sir, an old *Patrician*, an ancient Prophet, to tell Fortunes, and cozen our poor Country People of their single Money.

*Enter Oliver.*

*Ol.* Sir, Master *Oldreant*, in that he enjoys not your company, begins to doubt of his welcome.

*Cl.* Who led him into that doubt? I, or you that brought him hither?

*Ol.* Sir, his own desire, and love to you, brought him hither. I but shew'd him the way.

*Cl.* You reason fairly. Tell him I come.

*Ol.* Pray, Sir, be pleas'd to do so: for he says--

*Cl.* Nay, if we both talk together--

*Ol.* Who shall hear one another.

*Exit Oliver.*

*Cl.* But are there *Players* among the apprehended?

*Sen.* Yes, Sir. And they were contriving to act a Play among themselves, just as we surpriz'd 'em, and spoil'd their Sport.

*Cl.* *Players!* I'll pay them above all the rest.

*Sen.* You shall do well in that; to put 'em in Stock to set up again.

*Cl.* Yes, I'll put 'em in Stocks, and set 'em up to the Whipping-post. They can act *Justice*, can they? I'll act a *Justice* among 'em; that is to say, I will do justice upon them; that is to say--

*Sen.* Pray Sir, be not severe, they act *Kings* and *Emperors*, as well as *Justices*. And *Justice* is blind they say: you may therefore be pleas'd to wink a little. I find that you have merry old Gentlemen in your House, that are come far to visit you. I'll undertake that these *Players*, with the help of their *Pets*, in a device which they have already studied, and a pack of Cloaths which I shall supply 'em with, shall give your Guests much content, and move compassion in you towards the poor *Strawls*.

*Cl.* But you know my way of *Justice* (and it's a sure way) is to punish 'em first, and be compassionate afterwards; as I find 'em upon their Examination.

*Sen.* But for your Guests sakes, who (I know) do favour and affect the Quality of Actors very much, permit 'em, Sir. It will enlarge your Entertainment exceedingly.

*Cl.*



*Cla.* And perhaps save me the expence of a Renlet of Sack the while. Well, Sir, for that respect, and upon your undertaking that they shall please, I will prorogue my Justice on the *Regues*. And so to my merry Gentlemen, whom I will prepare to see their *Enterlude* against after Supper. But pray, Master *Sentwell*, as you have found my Neece, look to her, and see her decently brought home.

*Sen.* In her own best Apparel. But you must prorogue your displeasure to her too.

*Cla.* I will do so, until my scarce welcome *Guests* be gone.

*Enter Randal.*

*Ran.* Sir, my Master sends you word, and plainly, that without your Company, your Entertainment stinks. He has commanded me saddle his Nags, and away to night. If you come not at once, twice, thrice, he's gone presently, before Supper; He'll find an Host at an Inn worth a hundred o' you.

*Cla.* Good friend, I will now satisfy your Master, without telling him he has a sawcy Knave to his Man.

*Exit Cla.*

*Ran.* Thank your Worship.

*Sen.* Do you hear, Friend, you serve Master *Oldrents*.

*Ran.* I could ha' told you that. And the best Houle-keeper my Master is of any Gentleman in the County he dwells in; and the best Master to a man, as I, the worst of twenty, can say for him, and would be ashamed to say less.

*Sen.* Your name is *Randal*.

*Ran.* Forgi' me! Are you so wise? you are too young to be my *Godfire*, and I hope not old enough to be a Witch. How know you that I am *Randal*? Were you ever at my Masters House i' *Nottinghamshire*, or at *Dunghilford*, where I was born?

*Sen.* No. But I have Notes to know you by.

*Ran.* I was never twelve mile from thence i' my life, before this Journey. God send me within ken of our own Kitchen smoke again.

*Sen.* Your Masters Steward's name is *Springlove*.

*Ran.* Master *Springlove*, an't please you. There is not an honest Gentleman between this and the head of him. And my heart's with him, where e're he is. Know you him too?

*Sen.* Yes, and your Masters Daughters too.

*Ran.* Whaw.

*Sen.* And that they are all from home, your Master knows not where.

*Ran.* Whaw, whaw. Know you that too?

*Sen.* Yes, and the two young Gentlemen that are with 'em, Master *Vicant*, and Master *Hilliard*.

*Ran.* Whaw, whaw again. You know 'em all, I think. But know you where they all are?

*Sen.* Even here by, at my own House.

*Ran.* Whaw—

*Sen.* And they knowing that your Master is here, and Master *Blasy*—

*Ran.* Whaw, whaw.

*Sen.* And your self too. They directed me to find you, *Randal*, and bring you to 'em.

*Ran.* Whaw, whaw, whaw, whaw.----Why do we not go then.

*Sen.* But secretly. Not a word to any Body.

*Ran.* Mum----Will you go then.

*Enter Martin.*

*Mar.* O, Master *Oldrent's* man. Pray let me intreat you into the Buttery.

*Ran.* Will you go, Master *Gentleman*?

*Mar.* Indeed it is my Masters desire, and he commanded me.

*Ran.* Now, when it's Supper-time did he? to fill my belly with this drink to save his Meat? It's the manner in Charles Houses. Will you go, Master *Gentleman*?

*Mar.* Introth my Master is so merry with yours within----

*Ran.* Shite o' your Master. My Master's Steward's a better man. I'll to him, at this Gentleman's House, and all the rest. Whaw, whaw.

*Sen.* *Randal* you forget.

*Ran.* Mun again then. Why would you not go then?

*Exit Sent. and Rand.*

*Mar.* The man's as mad as his Master. The strangest Stranger that ever came to our House.

*Enter Talboy.*

*Tal.* Well, *Martin*, for confessing thy fault, and the means thou mad'st whereby she is taken, I am friends with thee. But I shall never look upon her, or thee---but with grief of mind, however I bear it outwardly. Oh---

*Mar.* You bear it very manfully methinks.

*Tal.* I, you think so, and I know so---But what I feel, I feel. Would one of us two had never seen one another----Oh---

*Mar.* You speak very good sense, Sir. But do's my Master continue his merry humour with the Old Gentlemen within.

*Tal.* Yes. Justice *Clack's* Clack goes as merrily as any.

*Mar.* Well said, Sir. Now you speak merrily too. But I could say somewhat that would still him. And for your comfort, I'll tell you. Mistress *Amie* is fallen in Love with one of the *Beggars*.

*Tal.* Then I have nothing else to do, but to laugh at thee as long as I live. Ha ha ha---To let a *Beggar* cozen thee of her. Ha ha ha. A *Beggar*! I shall dye merrily yet. Ha ha ha.

*Enter Clack, Oldrents, Hearty, Oliver.*

*Cl.* A ha Boys, a ha. This is right; that is to say, as I would have it; that is to say---

*Tal.* A *Beggar*. Ha ha ha---

*Mar.* Ha ha ha---

*Cl.* A ha Boys, a ha. They are as merry without, as we were within. A ha, Master *Oldrents*, and Master *Hearty*! The vertue of your Company turns all to Mirth and Melody, with a ha lololly lolly lolly. Is't not so, Master *Hearty*?

*Ol.* Why thus it should be: How was I deceiv'd! Now I see you are a good Fellow.

*Ol.* He was never so before. -- If it be a Lightning before Death, the! el  
is, I am his Heir.

*Tal. Mar.* Ha, ha ha ---

*Cl.* Again, Boys, again; that is to say, a *hay* Boys, a *hay*---

*Hea.* What is the motive of your Mirth, Nephew *Martin*? Let us Laugh with you.

*Old.* Was that spoke like my Friend, *Hearty*? Lack we motives to Laugh? Are not all things, any thing, every thing to be laugh'd at? And if nothing were to be seen, felt, heard, or understood, we would laugh at it too.

*Cl.* You take the loss of your Mistress merrily, Master *Talboy*.

*Tal.* More merrily than you will take the finding of her. Ha ha ha ---  
*A Beggar!* Ha ha ha ---

*Cl.* Can I be sad to find her, think you?

*Mar.* He thinks you will be displeas'd with her, and chide her.

*Cl.* You are deceiv'd, Master *Talboy*; you are wide, Master *Talboy*. Law and Justice shall sleep, and Mirth and good Fellowship ride a Circuit here to Night. A *hay*, Master *Oldrents*, a *hay* Master *Hearty*, and a *hay* Son *Oliver*, and a *hay* Nephew *Talboy*, that should ha' been, and *hay*, my Clerk *Martin*, and a *hay* for the *Players*. When come they? Son *Oliver*, see for Master *Sentwell*, that *Sentwell*, that is no readier with his new Company.

*Tal. Players!* Let us go see too. I never saw any *Players*.

*Ol.* This is the first fit that ever he had of this Disease. And if it be his last, I say, as I said before. I am his Heir.

*Old.* But is there a Play to be expected, and acted by Beggars?

*Cl.* That is to say, by *Vagabonds*; that is to say, by *strowling Players*. They are upon their Purgation. If they can present any thing to please you, they may escape the Law; that is (a *hay*) If not, to morrow, Gentlemen, shall be Acted, *Abuses stript and whipt*, among 'em; with a *hay*, Master *Hearty*, you are not merry.

*Enter Sentwell.*

And a *hay* Master *Sentwell*, where are your *Dramatis Personæ*; your *Prologus*, and your *Actus Primus*, ha? Ha! they given you the slip, for fear of the Whip? A *hay*.

*Sen.* A word aside, an't please you---

*Sentwell takes Clack aside, and gives him a Paper.*

*Old.* I have not known a man in such an Humour.

*Hea.* And of his own finding? He stole it, indeed, out of his own Bottles, rather than be rob'd of his Liquor. Misers use to tippie themselves so.

*Old.* He do's so out-do us, that we look like staid men again, *Hearty*; fine sober things!

*Hea.* But how long will it last? He'll hang himself to morrow, for the Cost we have put him to.

*Old.* I love a Miser's Feast dearly. To see how thin and scattering the Dishes stood, as if th'y fear'd quarrelling.

*Hea.* And how the Bottles, to scape breaking one another, were brought up by one and one!

*Old.* How one of the Serving-men, untrain'd to wait, spill the White-broth!

*Hea.* And another stumbling at the Threshold, tumbled in his Ditch of Rourcevals before him.

*Old.* And most suitable to the Niggardliness of his Feast, we shall now have an Entertainment, or Play, presented by Beggars.

*Cla.* Send 'em in, Master *Sentwell*. *Exit Sent.*  
*Sit* Gentlemen, the *Players* are ready to enter. And here's a Bill of their *Plays* You may take your choice.

*Old.* Are they ready for them all in the same Cloathes? Read 'em, good *Hearty*.

*Hea.* First, here's *The two lost Daughters*.

*Old.* Put not me in mind of the two lost Daughters, I prethee. What's the next?

*Hea.* *The vagrant Steward*.

*Old.* Nor of a vagrant Steward. Sure some abuse is meant me.

*Hea.* *The old Squire and the Fortune-tellor*.

*Old.* That comes nearer me. Away with it.

*Hea.* *The Beggars Prophecy*.

*Old.* All these Titles may serve to one Play, of a Story that I know too well. I'll see none of them.

*Hea.* Then here's *The merry Beggars*.

*Old.* I, that; and let 'em begin.

*Enter Talboy and Oliver.*

*Tal.* The *Players* are coming in: And Mistress *Amie* and your man *Martin* are to be Actors among 'em.

*Cla.* A hay then for that too. Some merry device sure.

*A Flourish of Shalms.*

Hark! the *Beggars Hoboys*. Now they begin.

*Old.* See, a most solemn Prologue.

*Enter Poet for Prologue.*

**T**O Knight, to Squire, and to the Genteels here,  
*We wish our Play may with content appear.*

*We promise you no daintly Wit of Court,*

*Nor City Pageantry, nor Country Sport:*

*But a plain piece of Action, short and sweet;*

*In Story true. You'll know it when you see't.*

*Old.* True Stories and true Jest do seldome thrive on *Stages*.

*Cla.* They'd best to please you with this tho', or a bay with a Whip for them to morrow.

*Old.* Nay, rather than they shall suffer, I will be pleas'd, let 'em Play their worst.

*A Flourish. Enter Patrico, with a Lawyer habited like Oldrens.*

See our *Patrico* among 'em.

*Hea.* That offered you a *Doxy* in the Barn.

*Par.* Your Children's Fortunes I have sold,

*That they shall Beg e're they be old.*

*And will you have a Reason why?*

*'Tis Justice in their Destiny—*

*Cla.*



*Cl.* Justice, ha! Are you meddling with Justices already?

*Pat.* Your Grandfather, by crafty wile  
Of bargaining, did much beguile  
A thrifless Heir of half the Lands,  
That are descended to your hands.  
And then, by Law, not Equity,  
Forc'd Him and his Posterity,  
To Woe and shameful Beggary.

*Law.* That was no fault of mine, nor of my Children.

*Pat.* But our fore-fathers Debts and Crimes,  
Although forborn till future times,  
Are not so paid. But what needs more,  
I wish you happy in your Store.

*Old.* Dost note this, Hearty?

*Hea.* You said you would be pleas'd, let 'em play their worst.

*Lawyer walks sadly, beats his breast, &c. To him enter Souldier  
like Hearty, and seems to comfort him.*

*Old.* It begins my Story, and by the same Fortune-teller that told me my Daughters Fortunes; almost in the same words. I know him now. And he speaks in the Play to one that personates me, as near, as they can set him forth.

*Cl.* How like you it, Sir? You seem displeas'd. Shall they be whipt yet?  
*A bay, if you say the word.*

*Old.* O, by no means, Sir; I am pleas'd.

*Soul.* Sad for the words of a base Fortune-teller?  
*Believe him! Hang him. I'll trust none of 'em.  
They have all Whims, and double meanings  
In all they say.*

*Old.* Whom does he talk or look like, now?

*Hea.* It is no matter whom. You are pleas'd you say.

*Soul.* Ha' you no Sack & the House? am I not here?  
*And never without a merry old Song?*

*Sing.*

*Old Sack, and old Songs, and a merry old Crew,  
Will fright away Cares when the ground looks bkew.  
And can you think on Gipsie-Fortune-tellers?*

*Law.* I'll think as little of 'em as I can.

*Soul.* Will you abroad then? But here comes your Steward.

*Enter Springlove to Lawyer.*

*Old.* Bless me! Is not that Springlove?

*Hea.* Is that you, that talks to him, or that Coxcomb I, do you think?  
Pray let 'em play their Play: the Justice will not hinder 'em, you see he's asleep.

*Spr.* Here are the Keys of all my Charge, Sir. And  
My humble suit is, that you will be pleas'd  
To let me walk upon my known occasions, this Summer.

Law. *Fie! Canst not yet late off those Vagranccies?*

*But I will strive no more to alter Nature.*

*I will not hinder thee, nor bid thee go.*

Old. My own very words at his departure.

Hea. No matter. Pray attend.

Law. Come Friend, I'll take your Counsel.

*Exeunt Lawy. Sould.*

Spr. *I've striven with my self to alter Nature in me,*

*For my good Masters sake; but all in vain;*

*For Beggers, Cuckoo-like, fly out again,*

*In their own notes and Season.*

*Enter Rachel, Meriel, Vincent, Hilliard.*

Ra. *Our Father's sadness will not suffer us*

*To live in's House.*

Mer. *And we must have a Progress.*

Vin. *The assurance of your Loves hath engag'd us.*

Hil. *To wait on you in any course.*

Ra. *Suppose we'll go a begging.*

Vin. Hil. *We are for you.*

Spr. *And that must be your Course, and suddenly,*

*To Cure your Father's sadness; who is told*

*It is your Destiny: Which you may quit,*

*By making it a trick of Youth and Wit.*

*I'll set you in the way.*

All 4. *But how? But how?*

*All talk aside.*

Old. My Daughters and their Sweethearts too. *If e*

*The scope of their Design; and the whole drift*

*Of all their Action now, with joy and comfort.*

Hea. *But take no notice yet. See a Whim more of it.*

*But the mad Rogue that acted me, I must make drunk anon.*

Spr. *Now! Are you all resolv'd?*

All 4. *Agreed, agreed.*

Spr. *You beg to absolve your Fortune, not for need.*

*Exeunt.*

Old. I must commend their Act in that. Pray thee let's call 'em, and end the matter here. The purpose of their Play, is but to work my Friendship, or their Peace with me; and they have it.

Hea. *But see a little more, Sir.*

*Enter Randal.*

Old. My Man Randal too! He has a Part with 'em?

Ran. They were well set a work, when they made me a Player. What is that I must say? and how must I act now? Oh! that I must be Steward for the Beggars in Master Steward's absence; and tell my Master, he's gone to measure Land for him to purchase.

Old. You Sir. Leave the work you can do no better (I can forbear no longer) and call the Actors back again to me.

Ran. With all my heart. And glad my part is so soon done.

*Exit.*

*Enter.*

*Enter Patrico.*

*Pat.* Since you will then break off our *Play*.  
 Something in earnest I must say ;  
 But let affected *Rhiming* go.  
 I'll be no more a *Patrico*.

My Name is *Wrought-on*---Start not. But ( if you  
 Desire to hear what's worth your best attention,  
 More privately ) you may draw nearer me.

*Oldrents goes to him.*

*Hes.* Hear no more *Fortunes*.

*Old.* You shall give me leave.

*Pat.* I am Grandson to that unhappy *Wrought-on*,  
 Whom your Grandfather, craftily, wrought out  
 Of his Estate. By which, all his Posterity  
 VVere, since, expos'd to *Beggery*. I do not charge  
 You, with the least offence in this. But, now,  
 Come nearer me : for I must whisper to you.

*Patrico takes Oldrents aside.*

I had a Sister, who among the Race  
 Of *Beggars*, was the fairest. Fair she was  
 In *Gentle Blood*, and *Gesture* to her *Beauty* ;  
 Which could not be so clouded with base *Cloathing* ;  
 But she attracted *Love* from worthy *Persons* ;  
 Which ( for her meaness ) they express'd in *Pity*,  
 For the most part. But some assaulted her  
 With amorous, though loose *desires* ; which she  
 Had virtue to withstand. Only one *Gentleman*  
 ( Whether it were by her *Affection*, or  
 His *Fate*, to send his Blood a begging with her,  
 I question not ) by her, in heat of *Youth*,  
 Did get a *Son*, who now must call you *Father*.

*Old.* Me ?

*Pa.* You. Attend me, Sir. Your *Bounty*, then,  
 Dispos'd your Purse to her ; in which, besides  
 Much Money ( I conceive by your neglect )  
 Was thrown this *Holy Relick*. Do you know it ?

*Old.* The *Agnus Dei* that my Mother gave me  
 Upon her Death-bed ! O the loss of it  
 VVas my sore grief. And, now, with joy, it is  
 Restor'd by *Miracle* ! Do's your Sister live ?

*Pa.* No, Sir. She died within a few daies after  
 Her Son was born ; and left him to my care ;  
 On whom I to this day, have had an Eye,  
 In all his wandrings.

*Old.* Then the Young Man lives !

*Enter*

*Enter Springlove. Vincent. Hilliard. Rachell. Meriel.*

*Pa.* Here with the rest of your fair *Children*, Sir.

*Old.* My Joy begins to be too great within me!

My Blessing and a Welcome to you all.

Be one anothers, and you all are mine.

*Vin. Hil.* We are agreed on that.

*Ra.* Long since. We only stood till you shook off your sadness.

*Mer.* For which we were fain to go a begging, Sir.

*Old.* Now I can read the *Justice* of my *Fate*, and yours---

*Cla.* Ha! *Justice*! are they handling of *Justice*?

*Old.* But more applaud great *Providence* in both.

*Clz.* Are they jecring of *Justices*? I watch'd for that.

*Ha.* I so me thought. No, Sir. The Play is done.

*Enter Sentwell. Amie. Oliver. Martin.*

*Sen.* See, Sir, your Neece presented to you.

*Springlove takes Amie.*

*Clz.* What with a Speech by one of the *Players*? Speak, Sir? and be not daunted. I am favourable.

*Spr.* Then, by your favour, Sir, this Maiden is my Wife.

*Cla.* Sure you are out o' your part. That is to say, you must begin again.

*Spr.* She's mine by solemn Contract, Sir.

*Cla.* You will not tell me that. Are not you my Neece?

*Am.* I dare not, Sir, deny't, we are Contracted.

*Clz.* Nay, if we both speak together, how shall we hear one another?

*Mer.* I must disprove the Contract.

*Tal.* That is my part to speak.

*Sen.* None can disprove it, I am Witness to it.

*Clz.* Nay, if we all speak---as I said before.

*Old.* Hear me for all then. Here are no Beggars (you are but one, *Patrico*) no *Rogues*, nor *Players*: But a select Company to fill this House with Mirth. These are my *Daughters*; these their *Husbands*; and this that shall marry your Neece, a Gentleman, my Son. I will instantly Estate him in a thousand pound a year to entertain his Wife; and to their Heirs for ever. Do you hear me now.

*Cla.* Now I do hear you. And I must hear you. That is to say, it is a Match. That is to say---as I said before.

*Tal.* And must I hear it too---O---

*Old.* Yes, though you whine yourt Eyes out.

*Her.* Nephew *Martin*, still the Child with a Suck-bottle of Sack. Peace Lamb; and I'll find a Wife for thee.

*Old.* Now *Patrico*, if you can quit your Function, To live a moderate Gentleman, I'll give you A competent Annuity for your Life.

*Pat.* I'll be withall, your faithful Beadf-man; and Send my whole Life in Prayers for you and yours.



*Cl.* And now, Clerk *Marin*, give all the *Beggars* my free *Passe*. without all manner of Correction ? that is to say, with a bay get 'em gone.

*Ol.* Are not you the Gentleman, that challeng'd me in right of your Friend here ?

*Vin.* Your Inspection's good, Sir.

*Ra.* And you the Gentleman ( I take it ) that would have made *Beggar-sports* with us, two at once.

*Mer.* For twelve pence a piece, Sir.

*Ol.* I hope we all are Friends.

*Spr.* Now, on my Duty, Sir, I'll beg no more,  
But your continual Love, and daily Blessing.

*Old.* Except it be at Court, Boy ; where if ever I come, it sh all be to beg the next Fool-Royal's place that falls.

*Spr.* A begging *Epilogue* yet would not be,  
Me thinks, improper to this *Comedie*.

## EPILOGUE.

**T**No' we are now no Beggars of the Crew  
We count it not a shame to beg of you.  
The Justice, here, has given his *Passe* free  
To all the rest, unpunish'd ; only we  
Are under Censure, till we do obtain  
Your Suffrages, that we may beg again ;  
And often, in the Course, We took to day,  
Which was intended for your Mirth, a Play  
Not without Action, and a little Wit,  
Therefore we beg Your *Passe* for Us and It.

F I N I S.